JIU JITSU STYLE

TM

VITOR SHAOLIN

RICO VIEIRA MASTERCLASS

JOSH HINGER BY NUMBERS

AUGUSTO FROTA

JIU JITSU & SOCIAL MEDIA

MARCO CANHA

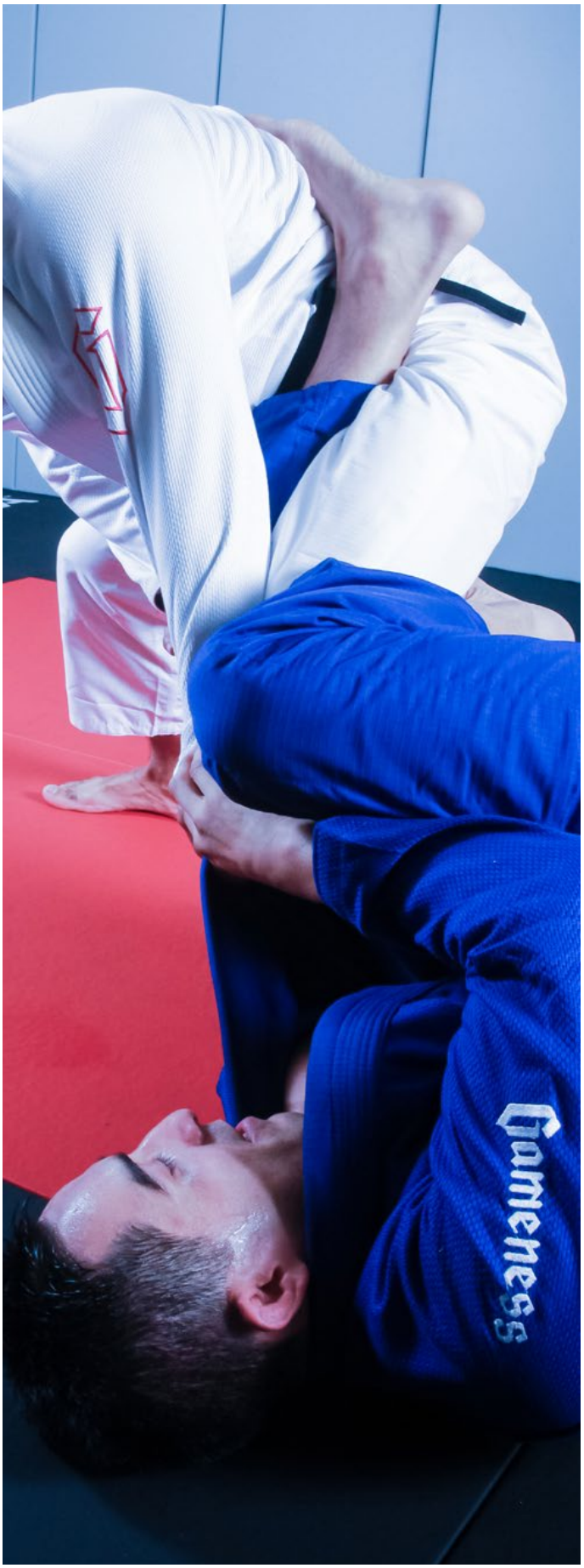
NOGI WITH DAN STRAUSS

PASSING AWKWARD GUARDS

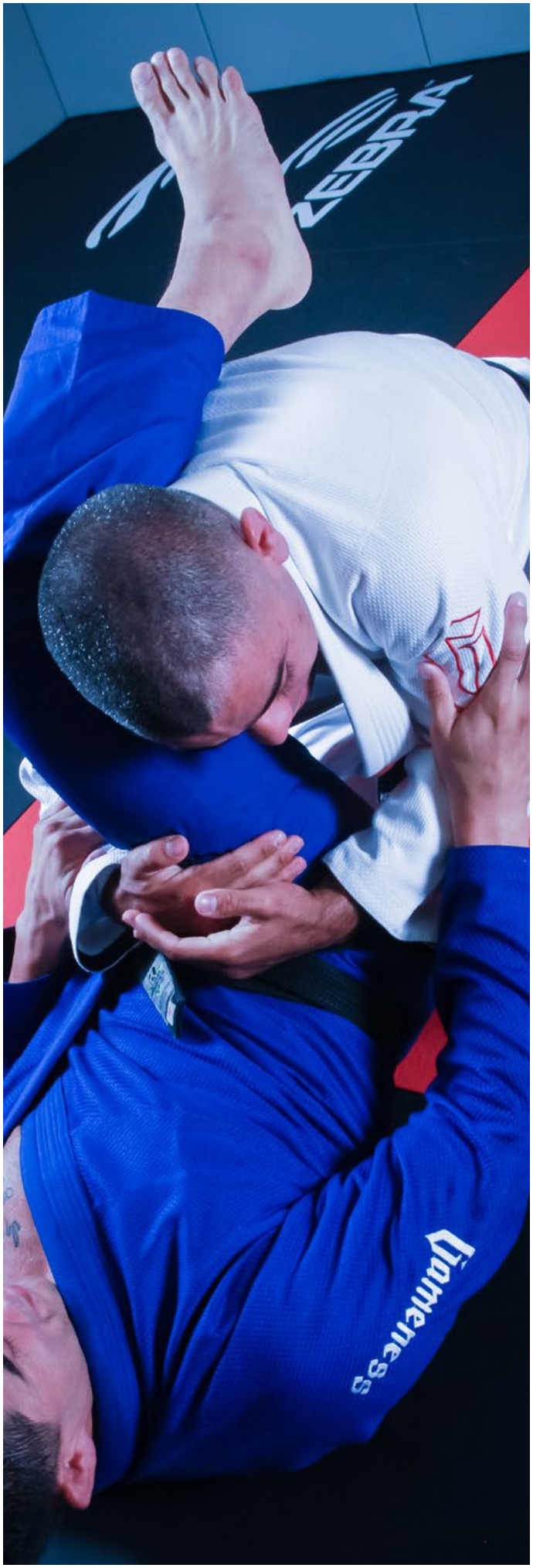
HER CALLING MACKENZIE

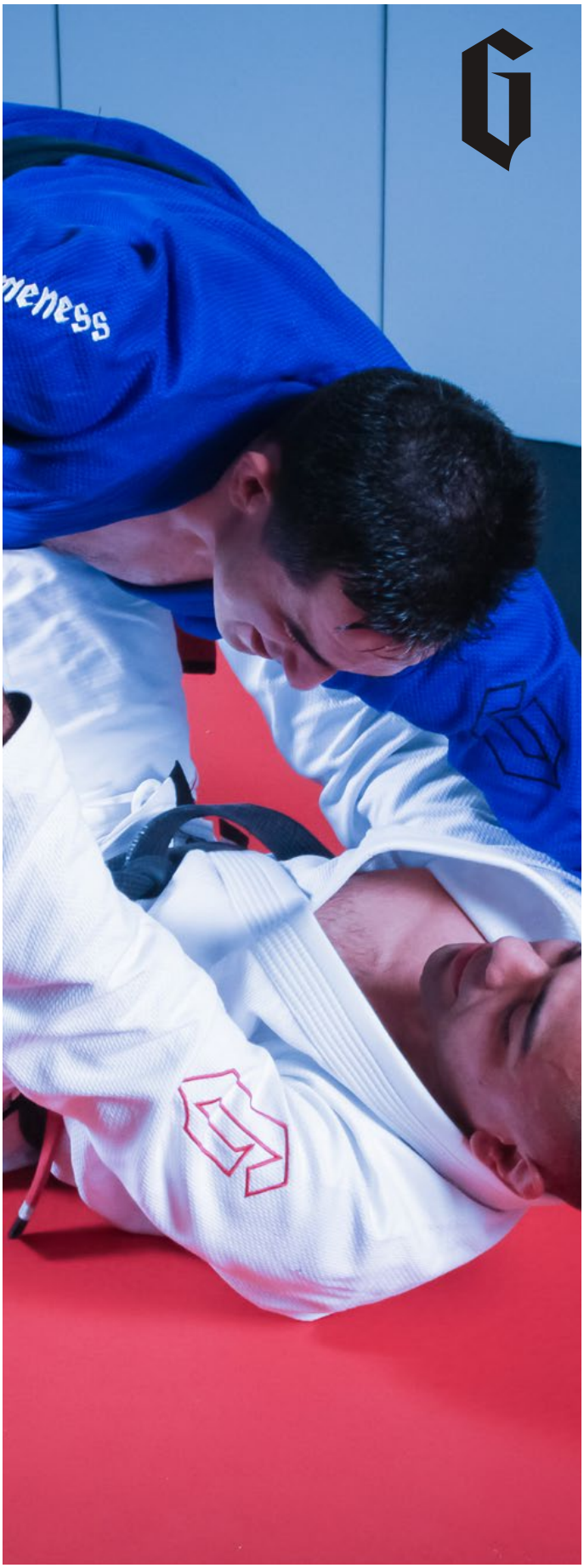
36
9 772049 454007
ISSUE: 36 / 2017 €3.95

Gameness



GAMENESS AIR GI
AVAILABLE FROM £54.99





Full range of new products at
WWW.GAMENESSEUROPE.COM

Athlete: Vitor 'Shaolin' Ribeiro

estiloLEVE
ULTRA LIGHTWEIGHT
COMPETITION GI
TATAMIFIGHTWEAR.COM
Tatami
fightwear

FIGHTERS
MARKET
EUROPE

15% OFF WITH PROMO CODE

FMEUROPE

L I V E

FIGHTERSMARKET.EU

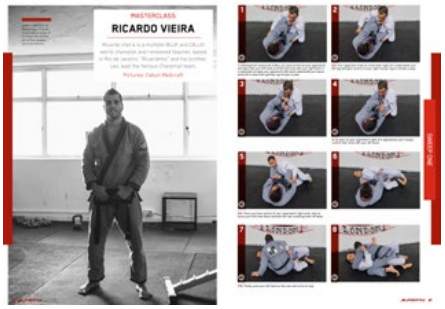
MANTO

CONTENTS

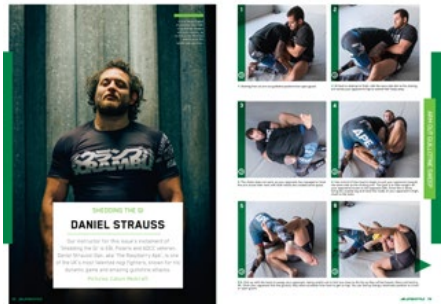
14: CLASSIC MATCH - GURGEL V BUSTAMANTE

26: MARCO CANHA - SMOOTH OPERATOR

42: VITOR "SHAOLIN" RIBEIRO - HIS STORY



60: MASTERCLASS WTH RICARDO VIEIRA



72: SHEDDING THE GI WITH DANIEL STRAUSS

16 POSITION STUDY
The cross choke

18 BELT PROMOTIONS
Snaps from your gradings

22 IT'S SCIENCE
Josh Hinger by numbers

24 HISTORY 101
Westside MMA

30 AUGUSTO FROTA
Swiss banking, cage fighting & BBJ camps

49 OLIVER GEDDES
If I were in charge.....

52 SAM JOSEPH
How BJJ helps us in diverse environments

54 THE BRITISH ARMY BJJ TEAM
Tackling PTSD

56 NIC GREGORIADES
Why the berimbolo can't save you

58 MATT JARDINE
Behind the mask - BJJ and social media

68 ASK THE DOCTOR
Braulio Estima answers your questions

80 NICK BROOKS
Passing awkward guards

86 FIT TO FIGHT
With Villain Strength founder, Andy Marshall

88 MIKE LENG
Answers your questions on nutrition

91 REVIEW CORNER
All the latest BJJ goodies under the microscope

96 TOURNAMENT REVIEW
FIVE Super League 2016

98 MATT BENYON
When in doubt, roll about

34 MACKENZIE DERN
In conversation

JIU JITSU STYLE

SECOND FRONT

Published by
Second Front Media Ltd
22 Beecham Road,
Reading, RG30 2RD,
United Kingdom

ISSN 2049-4548 (Print)
ISSN 2049-4556 (Online)

Office: +44 (0)1183 430822
Subscribe: +44 (0)1227 277248
subenquiries@newsstand.co.uk
General: info@bjjstyle.com
Editorial: callum@bjjstyle.com
Advertising: sales@bjjstyle.com

www.facebook.com/bjjstyle
www.twitter.com/jiujitsustyle

Annual digital subscription just £15. Jiu Jitsu Style's digital edition is available via the Android market and iTunes store. Visit our website for more details, search JIU JITSU STYLE on your smartphone or tablet, or visit pocketmags.com.

BJJSTYLE.COM

EDITOR: Callum Medcraft

CONSULTANT EDITOR: Roger Gracie

CONTRIBUTORS:
Roger Gracie
Nick Brooks
Matt Benyon
Ricardo Vieira
Can Sönmez
Callum Medcraft
Felix Rodriguez
Tom Bell
Oliver Geddes
Andy Marshall
Braulio Estima
Sam Joseph
Andre Borges
Daniel Strauss
Tyler Bishop
Matt Jardine
Nic Gregoriades
Mike Leng

ILLUSTRATION CONTRIBUTOR:
Gartista

PHOTOGRAHIC CONTRIBUTORS:
Callum Medcraft
Andy Douglas
Andre Camara
GoLive
Getty Images
Flavio Scorsato
Blanca Marisa Garcia
Frota Academy
Alberto Marchetti
Joshua Halvatzis

COVER SHOT: Flavio Scorsato

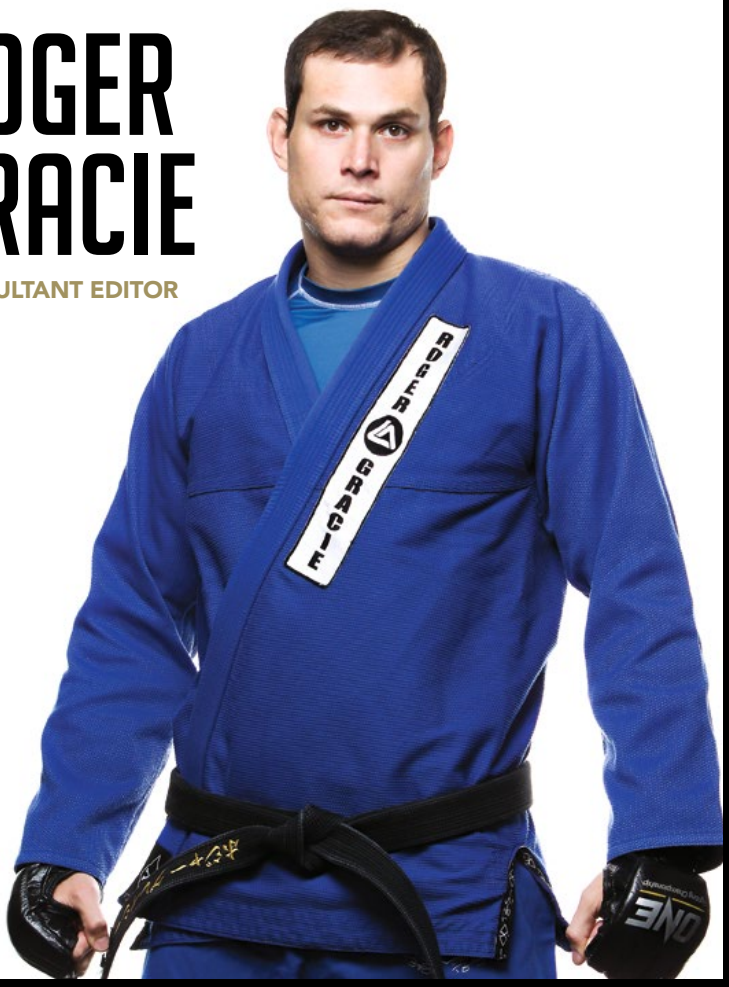
Distributed to the newstrade by:
COMAG Specialist – 01895 433800

PRINTED BY:
Buxton Press Ltd

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed by the contributors to this magazine may not represent the views of the publishers Second Front Media Limited. Second Front Media Limited are not liable for any mistake, misprint or typographic errors.Copyright: 2017 Second Front Media Limited. All material in this magazine, including both text and images, is protected by copyright. Replication via republishing in any print or digital form requires consent from Second Front Media Limited.

ROGER GRACIE

CONSULTANT EDITOR



"I AM EXTREMELY EXCITED TO SAY THAT EARLY 2017 WILL SEE THE LAUNCH OF MY FIRST ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM, ROGER GRACIE TV"

Hi everyone, and welcome to our first issue of 2017! The start of a new year is always a great time to look at our goals and assess how we can progress forward – on and off the mat. I challenge you to choose your goals wisely, so that you can stick to them, and make this next twelve months the best yet.

I am extremely excited to say that early 2017 will see the launch of my first online training program, Roger Gracie TV. Truthfully, this is a project that has taken a long time to organise and film, but it has been very rewarding. I always envisioned having all my techniques in one place, so that it can serve as a useful resource for people learning the art, as well as myself.

I believe you need to make yourself hard to submit, and always look to finish fights by submission. My whole game is based around these two principles, and these are the principles I want to promote with Roger Gracie TV. We've filmed a lot of content already and we'll be adding new videos all the time, so I hope people enjoy my techniques and my approach to becoming a better fighter.

The website will not only include a growing library of my techniques, but videos of me sparring at the academy, and plenty of self-defence videos from my father, Mauricio Gomes. If you're interested in receiving news on the website launch, as well as early discount codes, please visit **www.rogergracietv.com** and leave your email with us.

In our first issue of the year I'm glad that we've managed to secure an awesome cover feature with Mackenzie Dern, who has been setting the jiu jitsu scene alight recently. Mackenzie is clearly one of the most talented women in our sport, and she's now making a name for herself in the MMA world, so do make sure you check out her thoughts on growing jiu jitsu and her career going forward.

We also have a fantastic Masterclass lined-up for you this time around with Checkmat co-founder, Ricardo Vieira. 'Rico' is a friend of mine from Rio, and we all know his jiu jitsu CV is as good as anyone's in the game. He shows some great reverse de la Riva transitions and attacks, so plenty for you to study!

Enjoy the latest issue of the magazine guys and – until next time – keep training and enjoying jiu jitsu.

ROGER GRACIE

スクランブル®
SCRAMBLE
×
JUDGE DREDD
JUDGE DREDD®; REBELLION A/S; ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
SCRAMBLE x JUDGE DREDD
SCRAMBLE TEAMS UP WITH THE LEGENDARY LAWMAN
FOR A SERIES OF JIU JITSU PRODUCTS INSPIRED BY THE WORLD-FAMOUS COMIC
FIRST RELEASES OUT NOW
WWW.SCRAMBLESTUFF.COM

THE BIG PICTURE

Brothers in arms: Saulo and Xande Ribeiro photographed in California.

PICTURE: FLAVIO SCORSATO

CLASSIC MATCH

FABIO GURGEL BECAME THE FIRST EVER IBJJF HEAVYWEIGHT BLACK BELT CHAMPION

THE FIRST IBJJF MUNDIALS

The Ultimate Fighting Championship led to the worldwide expansion of BJJ after 1993, but it also helped to invigorate jiu jitsu within Brazil. Yet this was still within the context of mixed martial arts: back in the early '90s, the two sports were closely linked.

In terms of developing BJJ as a competitive sport on its own terms rather than as an adjunct to MMA, it is not Royce Gracie who looms largest, but one of his cousins. After the untimely death of Rolls Gracie in 1982, the chosen successor, Carlos Gracie Jr, took on the heavy responsibility of trying on a legend's shoes. He proved successful, moving the school from the hustle and bustle of Copacabana to Barra da Tijuca. Rather than naming this new school after himself, he emphasised its location: Gracie Barra.

Carlinhos' place in history would have been assured as the founder of Gracie Barra, but his position as head of the Confederação Brasileira de Jiu-Jitsu (CBJJ) has been even more influential. According to Carlos Loddo, this body was a combination of several affiliated state federations governing jiu jitsu in Brazil, not to be confused with the later IBJJF (a for-profit company originally founded by Carlson Gracie in 1997, passing fully to Carlos Jr's control in 2002). In *Choque*, the situation is described slightly differently:

"Oswaldo Alves and Carlos Gracie Jr's motivation in creating the Confederação Brasileira de Jiu-Jitsu (CBJJ) in 1993 was to transform jiu-jitsu into an internationally recognised sport, like judo, and a profitable business. The major competitions were established as a result (the Brasileiro and Brasileiro de Equipes in 1994, the Pan Americano in 1995 and the Mundial in 1996). […]

Carlos Gracie (with Oswaldo Alves) didn't create the CBJJ for purely altruistic reasons. He was as much a businessman as Robson [Gracie]. Gracie Magazine was one of his properties. The magazine, his academy, and his organization, all worked in concert to make Carlos Jr. powerful and rich."

In 1996 (by IBJJF.org records, at least), the CBJJ held the first Pan American Jiu Jitsu Championships in collaboration with Joe Moreira's United States Federation of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. That set the stage for the first attempt at a World Championships, later that year.

Looking through the results of the 1996 event, numerous names stand out. One of the most interesting match-ups in retrospect paired two men who would later head their own teams. At the time, Murilo Bustamante was a major name from the mighty Carlson Gracie team, that took a hefty proportion of titles from the Mundials that year. That included the ultimate prize of the Absolute division, which would be closed out by two Carlson luminaries, Ricardo Liborio and Amaury Bitetti (the latter would come away with the gold).

In the final of the heavyweight division, Bustamante faced Fabio Gurgel, a top competitor from the rival Alliance team. Gurgel had been one of the founders, together with Romero 'Jacare' Cavalcanti, Alexandre Paiva and Fabio's older brother, Fernando. This new world championship was an opportunity for Fabio to make a lasting mark on jiu jitsu history, one of several Alliance competitors with a realistic chance to claim a medal.

WORDS: CAN SÖNMEZ ILLUSTRATIONS: GARTISTA

THE MATCH

Gurgel and Bustamante clinch from an upright posture, head to head, methodically hunting for grips. They stay on their feet looking for takedowns for over half the match, until a perfectly executed throw puts Gurgel on top and two points ahead. He looks to establish side control, then spins to the other side as the Carlson fighter attempts to move into guard. It looks as though Gurgel might take his back, but Bustamante hooks a foot, rolling through into guard.

Gurgel secures a solid passing position. Murilo focuses on blocking Gurgel's hips, enabling Gurgel to solidify a cross-face. He uses that to move through into side control, then Bustamante capitalises on the space left by Gurgel's shift to north-south. Turning to his knees, Bustamante grasps his opponent's trousers to move into a takedown, but Gurgel has already sprawled and blocked the attempt.

The Alliance man is still ahead on points as they get back to their feet. Once again, the standing battle is slow and methodical. As a last ditch, Bustamante pulls guard, but it is too late. A few seconds later, Gurgel stands up and raises his arms to the crowd, victorious.

MATCH LENGTH: 10 MINS
LOCATION: RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL
VENUE: TIJUCA TENIS CLUBE
EVENT: IBJJF MUNDIALS

"OSWALDO ALVES AND CARLOS GRACIE JR'S MOTIVATION IN CREATING THE CONFEDERAÇÃO BRASILEIRA DE JIU-JITSU (CBJJ) IN 1993 WAS TO TRANSFORM JIU-JITSU INTO AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED SPORT, LIKE JUDO, AND A PROFITABLE BUSINESS" - CHOQUE VOL. 3

AFTERMATH

Arguably thanks to his judo as much as his BJJ skills, Gurgel was the first heavyweight champion. He would be the second as well, winning the division in 1997 along with a silver in that year's Absolute category. His crown slipped for a few years, though he still won a silver and then a bronze in 1998 and 1999. Gurgel would reclaim his dominance with a pair of golds in 2000 and 2001. More famously, he has become a highly regarded coach, leading Alliance to multiple team victories. This is all the more impressive when you consider that the Alliance team was hit by a major split in 2002, a schism that would eventually lead to a significant number of the teams that hold sway today (such as Checkmat and ATOS).

Bustamante remained in contention at the Mundials, though a level below Gurgel. He managed two bronzes in 1998 in the heavy and absolute, then rose to the occasion in 1999 with a gold medal. That was to be his last foray at the Mundials, when he also became better known as a coach than a competitor. His attention shifted from BJJ to mixed martial arts. In that arena, Bustamante enjoyed considerable success himself, along with initially his Carlson team mates, then his Brazilian Top Team colleagues and students.

Since that first event in 1996, the Mundials has gone on to become the most prestigious gi competition in BJJ, with a potent history that helps maintain that position. However, it is no longer unchallenged for pre-eminence. The Abu Dhabi Combat Club has long provided the tournament competitors most want to win without the gi: the Abu Dhabi based World Pro may yet become the most cherished gi title, particularly as there is the considerable incentive of prize money.

SOURCES: MIXEDMARTIALARTSHISTORY.WORDPRESS.COM • IBJJF.ORG • PEDREIRA, ROBERTO, *CHOQUE VOL. 3*

POSITION STUDY

THE CROSS CHOKE

THE CROSS CHOKE, KNOWN IN PORTUGUESE AS '*ESTRANGULAMENTO CRUZADO*' IS A COMMON SUBMISSION OFTEN DESCRIBED AS THE FIRST TECHNIQUE YOU LEARN, BUT THE HARDEST TO MASTER. THE CHOKE WORKS WITH THE ARMS OF THE ATTACKER IN FRONT OF THE OPPONENT'S CHEST, HOLDING ONTO THE COLLARS OF THEIR KIMONO IN A CROSSING FRAME, WHICH GIVES THE MOVE ITS NAME.

In judo, this same position goes by its Japanese names: *nami juji jime* – thumbs inside the collar, or *gyaku juji jime* for thumbs on the outside. The cross choke, and its variations from mount and closed guard, are regarded as part of the basic jiu jitsu curriculum by the majority of BJJ schools.

THE HISTORY OF THE CROSS CHOKE

The cross choke has been part of the jiu jitsu syllabus from this martial art's inception in Brazil, often being referred to by Helio Gracie as one of his best moves. Indeed, the Gracie jiu jitsu founder finished four of his eight submission victories in grappling with this choke, including his famous 1951 win over Yukio Kato at Maracanã Stadium.

This submission will have likely reached Brazil by way of Mitsuyo Esai Maeda, the instructor of Carlos Gracie, who would have learnt it as part of the twelve constriction techniques of the Kodokan Judo 'Shime-waza' list (list of judo strangle holds taught by the Kodokan Institute). The cross choke, particularly the nami juji jime variation, will have derived from judo's predecessor – jujutsu (also known as 'traditional jiu jitsu' or 'Japanese jiu jitsu'), being listed by Danzan Ryu (a form of jujutsu) in its Shimete list according to www.judoinfo.com

APPLICATION IN BRAZILIAN JIU JITSU

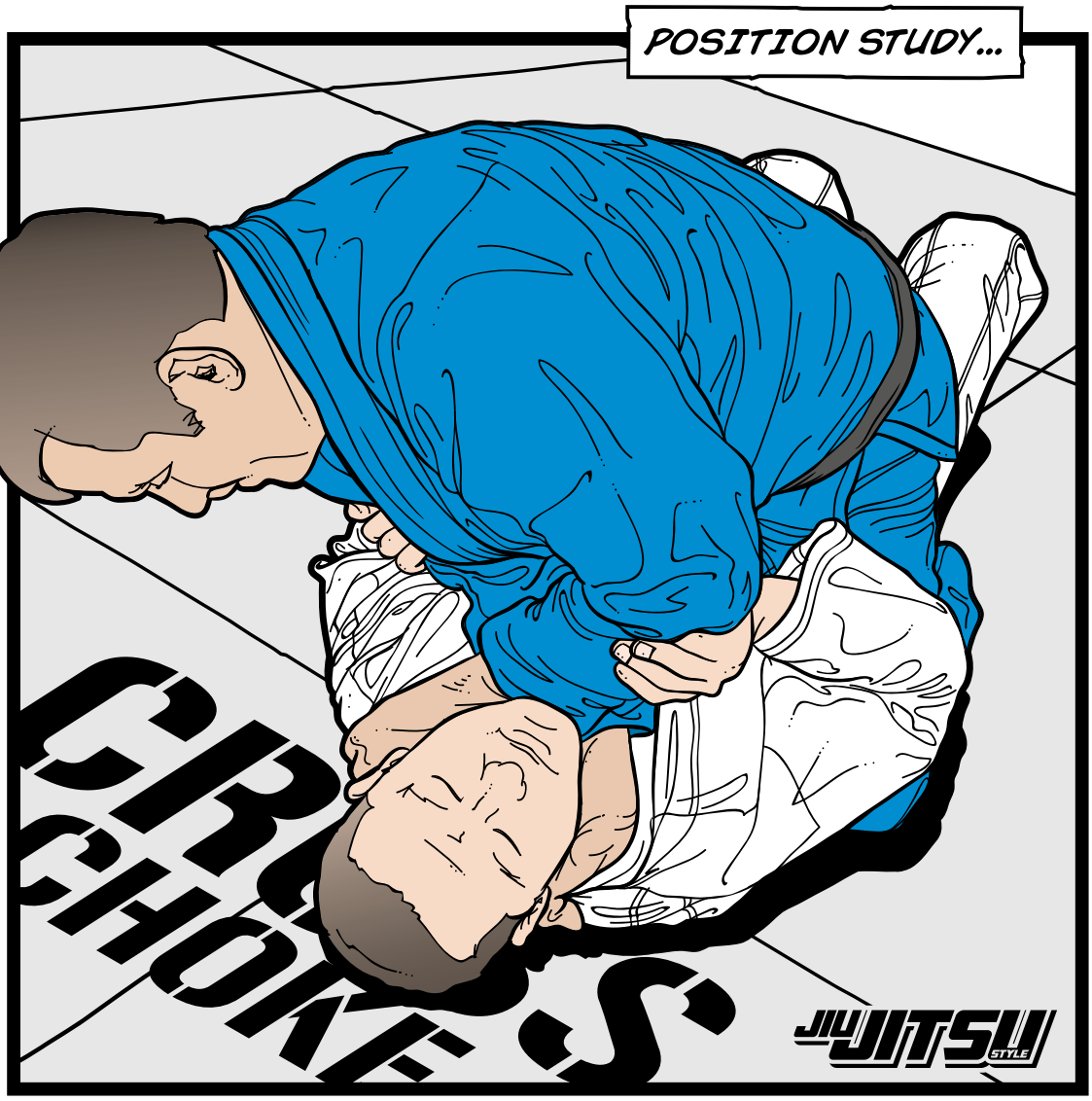
The cross choke has been one of the most consistent techniques in jiu jitsu, surviving the test of time through several generations of technical advancements. From Helio Gracie in the early days of Gracie jiu jitsu, the cross choke was later used by his son, Rickson Gracie, as one of his favourite finishing techniques with the gi. Another Gracie family member who made the cross choke one of his strongest weapons was the legendary Roger Gracie. Roger used this stranglehold to finish 13 opponents during his career at black belt, being particularly successful with this choke throughout his 2009 double gold campaign at the IBJJF World Jiu Jitsu Championships.

Traditionally a position used in full mount or closed guard, the cross choke has had many variables over the years. One of its most recent trends has been the cross choke from knee slide guard pass, made famous by Leandro Lo and Romulo Barral, who made this submission a trademark of their passing style.

CROSS CHOKE TOP COMPETITORS

HELIO GRACIE
RICKSON GRACIE
ROGER GRACIE
ALEXANDRE RIBEIRO
ROMULO BARRAL
LEANDRO LO

ILLUSTRATION: GARTISTA



WORDS: ANDRE BORGES, EDITOR AT WWW.BJJHEROES.COM

GOLD LABEL

–

DESIGNED AND EMBROIDERED
IN THE UK

PROGRESSJJ.CO.UK

BELT PROMOTIONS

IF YOU WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE AWARDED A NEW BELT RECENTLY, THIS PAGE REPRESENTS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SAVOUR THE MOMENT WITH RECOGNITION IN JIU JITSU STYLE! SEND IN DETAILS OF YOUR RECENT PROMOTION, INCLUDING THE RANK YOU ACHIEVED AND YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S NAME, AND WE WILL PUBLISH AS MANY AS WE CAN IN OUR MAGAZINE.

SEND YOUR EMAILS TO U2US@BJJSTYLE.COM

Reyce Asesimba was promoted to blue belt by Marco Canha and Ricardo Vieira at Fightzone London.

Joseph Ward was promoted to blue belt by Max Campos at Oxford Shootfighters.

10th Planet London grading day. Daniel Wyatt and Sean Harper were promoted to purple belt, while George Shoesmith, Adam Sharpe, Seb England, Reece Jagger, Jack Sear and Mat Wakefield were all promoted to blue belt by head coach Jamie Scott.

Kirk Bloomer was promoted to blue belt at the age of 46 by Jacques Wagner at Monkey Jits, South Africa.

Marc Fong was promoted to brown belt, Ruben Andrade to purple belt and Anthony Gallego blue belt by Julio Lang at Higher Ground BJJ.

Rassan Guimarães was promoted to brown belt by Miogre Tavares at Gracie Barra Goiania.

John Harrison was promoted to purple belt and his son, Jack Harrison, was promoted to yellow belt by Leo Negao and Duane Harper.

Krystof Robak was promoted to brown belt and Paul Severn promoted to black belt by Chico Mendes at Checkmat Worcestershire.

James Mardell was promoted to purple belt by Jack Magee.

Paul Standerwick was promoted to black belt by Ricardo da Silva.

Christian Graugart promoted Fredrik Persson to purple belt, Mattias Degermo and Arturo Rodríguez to blue belt.

Vicki Cassels was promoted to blue belt by Sylvio Behring at Arashi-Do Sylvan Lake, Alberta,Canada.

Rowan Draper was promoted to blue belt by Braulio Estima at Gracie Barra Birmingham.

THE EVER CHANGING LANDSCAPE

So much can happen in a year, and it generally does. In jiu jitsu terms, we've seen competitions gaining professionalism, with more money up for grabs, as well as athlete trash talk and personal vendettas reaching all-time highs. Is it 'all good'? Well, that's a tough question to answer…

Sitting on the mat at Polaris Pro 4, I was happily snapping away as Garry Tonon took to the stage donning a Captain America rope. Despite the epic photo opportunity in front of me, focus was soon shifted when I saw the man directly behind him swagger through the crowd. The self-proclaimed king, Gordon Ryan, complete with crown and comedy Union Jack sunglasses, was lapping up all the attention. The sight of Ryan following his teammate down to the ring in his pantomime costume brought back memories of my favourite WWF (it was still the WWF in my time, kids) wrestlers taking to the ring with their elaborately dressed managers following in the wings. And, guess what, I absolutely loved it.

I'd hazard a guess that most people join me in finding these bouts of showmanship as nothing more than pure entertainment. Truth be told, the likes of Jeff Glover and, if you go further back, Fernando Terere, have been doing it for years. It is the spate of online proverbial between athletes on social media that has left many of us debating whether it's something we really want to see in our community. It does beg the question: do we really need to go all 'MMA' in order to grow?

Social media promotes freedom of speech and gives us all a platform, which in turn offers athletes more tools than ever to create buzz around their personal brand. By 'swimming against the tide', fighters give themselves instant exposure, and in a world where the 'professionals' are – let's face it – still hustling for table scraps compared to other sports, can we begrudge people using every tool at their disposal to gain notoriety?

Whatever your opinion is on the guys, Garry Tonon, Gordon Ryan and the 'Danaher Death Squad' know how to grapple, and their stock is continuously on the rise. Ryan, in particular, has seen his profile skyrocket over the past year, and we can pretend that it's solely due to his performances on the mat, but we all know his performances off it have been just as crucial to his steep transition to the top.

"IF FACEBOOK HAD BEEN AROUND 70 YEARS AGO, I'VE NO DOUBT HELIO GRACIE WOULD HAVE BEEN JUMPING ONLINE TO CALL OUT HIS NEXT TARGET WITHIN A HEARTBEAT"

And let's not forget Conor McGregor's protégé, Dillon Danis. Though association with one of the most famous fighters on the planet obviously has an impact, Dillon's online persona has no doubt kept his name on the tip of our tongues and in promoters' minds. Danis, who competed at Polaris Pro 4 against Jackson Sousa, carried out all his interviews with his sunglasses on, repeatedly told the cameras he's 'going to be number 1' and held the most intense stare-down of the day at the weigh-ins. Of course he's going to stand out, of course he's going to split opinion, but you can't deny it's entertaining.

Naturally, with every high, there is a low, and perhaps this is where balance can be restored. Gordon Ryan's run of wins came to an end in late 2016, with Gracie Barra's Felipe Pena inflicting the defeat. Having evaded all the leg attacks Ryan had for him, Pena went on to sink in a rear naked choke and beat his opponent at his own game. Ryan had approached this match the same way he always does, with plenty of confidence, plenty of cheeky posts on social media, and with it plenty of exposure. After the fight, the online community seemed to rejoice in the de-throning of the self-proclaimed King Ryan, but as the saying goes, 'the bigger they are, the harder they fall.'

On reflection, I don't see any issue with athletes exchanging words via the internet and creating heat ahead of matches. If Facebook had been around 70 years ago, I've no doubt Helio Gracie would have been jumping online to call out his next target within a heartbeat. Ultimately, social media can only act as an extension of your own personality. As long as the fighters maintain a level of respect and are happy to back up their actions, just as Gordon Ryan and Dillon Danis have done, then it's all good with me. Take your wins like a man, your losses like a man and embrace both love and hate.

In closing, as it's the first issue of the new year, it's often time to reflect and look at ways to improve. From a jiu jitsu perspective, I will be using 2017 to look for more ways to incorporate our beloved art into my life. Whether it's getting to class an extra day a week, studying more content online, looking to help teach a session or entering competitions, we all know jiu jitsu is good for you, so try and take it to the next level this coming twelve months!

Thanks for picking up our latest issue and I hope you enjoy it.

CALLUM MEDCRAFT

NOT FOR SALE

IT'S SCIENCE

BY TYLER BISHOP

JOSH HINGER

JOSH HINGER IS A BLACK BELT UNDER ANDRE GALVAO AND THE REIGNING MIDDLEWEIGHT NOGI WORLD CHAMPION. THE ATOS FIGHTER IS KNOWN FOR HIS EXCELLENT USE OF GUILLOTINE GRIPS AND CHOKES, AND HAS EMERGED AS A STANDOUT NOGI FIGHTER ON THE COMPETITION SCENE OVER THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS.

50% OF ALL HINGER'S SUBMISSIONS WERE TRIANGLE CHOKES

BISHOPBJJ.COM
THE SCIENCE OF JIU JITSU

'It's Science' is brought to you by BishopBjj.com. The goal of BishopBjj.com is to expand and empower the jiu jitsu community by emphasising the science and art of jiu jitsu in fun and exciting ways. We want to highlight what makes jiu jitsu so calculated, but also what makes it so much fun.

50%

OF HINGER'S PASSES CAME FROM HALF GUARD OR BUTTERFLY GUARD

HINGER SCORED 33% OF HIS SUBMISSIONS FROM THE BOTTOM POSITION

91%

OF HINGER'S MATCHES ENDED WITH THE VICTORY

41%

OF HINGERS MATCHES INCLUDED SAW HIM SECURE A TAKEDOWN

6.38 MINUTES

AVERAGE MATCH LENGTH

83%

OF HINGER'S MATCHES SAW HIM SCORE FIRST

TOTAL MATCHES OBSERVED	12
TOTAL MINUTES OBSERVED	79
MATCHES WON BY SUBMISSION	06
MATCHES WON BY POINTS	05
OPPONENT WON MATCH	01
TOTAL MATCHES WON	11

ABSTRACT:

IAll matches observed of Josh Hinger used in this small sample occurred at major jiu jitsu events in the years 2012-2016. Only techniques, occurrences, and outcomes that were recorded are displayed in the data below (i.e. if no butterfly sweeps occurred, there will not be a representation of that in the sample data charts). Matches were selected at random. This is a limited sample but – given the estimated number of matches in this time period – it is well above the percentage necessary to create a scientifically validated trend sampling.

THE BREAKDOWN

Josh Hinger took the Nogi scene by storm earlier this year by securing his first IBJJF Nogi world title at black belt at the Nogi World Championships. In his tear through the tournament he was able to overcome several of the biggest names in submission grappling. In our breakdown of this Atos standout we get to see exactly what makes him such a special grappler.

THE STUDY

In a lot of ways, Josh Hinger is outside the box. He is often the elder statesman in many of the adult divisions, he embraces diversity and thrives in the chaos of a match. He is the definition of a grinder – in both the meta and macro games.

The tremendous diversity we saw in Hinger's game is exemplified in the start of his matches. In 50% of his matches, his opponent eventually pulled guard on him. In the other 50%, he mixed together an unpredictable firestorm of different takedowns. Of all the competitors we've ever studied Hinger showed more diversity than any other; ultimately showcasing five completely different techniques.

In our observations, Hinger was not afraid to colour outside the lines in his approach. In approximately 38% of his guard passes he went straight to mount. In another 38% of his passes, he attacked kimuras or pressured the head and arm enough to pass in a way that I'm ashamed to admit I did not fully understand. It was actually difficult for me to categorize many of his different passes as they fall outside the categories that we've used for dozens of other competitors. Again, this is an example of Hinger dancing to the beat of his own drum.

Hinger is the first subject we've ever studied that did not record a single sweep in any of the matches we observed. This is even more puzzling once you consider that, in our study, Hinger secured approximately 33% of his submissions from the bottom position.

I would describe Hinger as a freestyle submission specialist. His diversity often put him in position for very unique and unorthodox submissions. This would often see him snatching submissions very quickly when transferring into new positions against his opponent. Surprisingly, 50% of these submissions were triangles. I say 'surprisingly' because the rest were a mix of leg locks, arm locks, and monoplata armbars. Again, it's his diversity and ability to thrive in quick transitions that made him such a threat to his opponents.

Ultimately, Hinger was a really fun competitor to study. He was one of the first I've observed that I can fully admit that I had trouble breaking down. His game just had so much fluidity in it that it made it hard for me to understand some of the nuances of his techniques. I can imagine him being a very difficult opponent to prepare for because he has so many different tools to attack with.

It will be interesting to see what comes next from Hinger. He's proved that he has the ability and prowess to stick around and make waves in his division for years to come.

START OF MATCH

GUARD PULL	1
DUCK UNDER	1
DOUBLE LEG	1
SINGLE LEG	2
OPPONENT PULLS GUARD	6
TAKES THE BACK	1

PASS (POSITION)

ON KNEES	1
HALF GUARD	4
STANDING	3

PASS (TYPE)

KNEE CUT FROM HALF GUARD	1
REVERSE SIDE HALF GUARD	1
ATTACKED KIMURA OR HEAD/ARM PRESSURE TO PASS	3
MOUNT FROM HALF BUTTERFLY	3

TAKING THE BACK

TURTLE	2
STANDING	1

SUBMISSION (POSITION)

NORTH/SOUTH	1
MOUNT	2
CLOSED GUARD	1
HALF GUARD TOP	1
COLLAR SLEEVE GUARD	1

SUBMISSION (TYPE)

ARMBAR	1
MONOPLATA/ARMBAR	1
LEGLOCK	1
TRIANGLE	3

SUMMARY

SUCCESSES: HALF GUARD PASSES & TRIANGLE CHOKES

AVOIDED: PULLING GUARD

HISTORY 101:
WESTSIDE MMA

In Little Rock, Arkansas, Matt Hamilton was keen to play American Football, but had difficulty due to his small stature. "When I got to high school, after I got my ribs cracked for the third time, I said, 'you know what, I'm just going to start martial arts.'" He began with taekwondo, gradually transitioning to kickboxing. A few years later, Hamilton was shown the first UFC by a friend, sparking his interest.

"There's a Brazilian guy in the middle of Arkansas with nothing to do and all day to do it. So, I started working with him, and pretty soon was the best jiu jitsu guy around here. When I started MMA, that was the model: you fight a bigger guy, you let him whip your ass until he gets tired, then you submit him. […] I was getting the hell beat out of me doing it, but that's the way it was, that's the way you thought jiu jitsu was."

While Hamilton learned the ropes of jiu jitsu, a fifteen year old called Rolando 'Roli' Delgado moved from Philadelphia to Little Rock.

Delgado's interest in Brazilian jiu jitsu was also initiated by the UFC. He therefore sought out a school in his new home, with two semesters of wrestling under his belt. Jiu jitsu was still in its infancy, meaning that Delgado's experience of training under blue belts was not uncommon.

Delgado stepped onto the mats of the school Hamilton had begun running with Danny Dring. That gym was affiliated to Toni Pontes, a Nova Uniao black belt. When Hamilton later split from Dring, Delgado decided to stick with Hamilton. They launched an academy together, Westside MMA, still connected to Pontes. There was some tension between the new venture and Delgado's old instructor Danny Dring, which would eventually lead Pontes to side with Dring's school.

Like his instructor Matt Hamilton, Delgado also had success in MMA. This resulted in an opportunity to enter the house for a season of TUF. As Delgado remembered on the Eat Sleep Grow Repeat podcast, there were both positives and negatives. He hated the frat boy atmosphere, but was able to train with jiu jitsu greats like Amaury Bitetti, along with using the television exposure to boost his profile.

Delgado always had a strong interest in cross-training, a trait that has resulted in his leglock expertise. That knowledge came from people like Hayastan alumnus Max Bishop, with further major contributions by legendary catch wrestler Billy Robinson:

"It was just a coincidence, he walked into the gym one day. He just asked, 'Do you guys need a grappling coach?' I saw his ears, and I was like 'No, we don't need one, we have two black belts here, but what's the deal?' I was willing to hear him out. What's funny is that when I told him there were two black belts, there was no expression on his face whatsoever. He could give no shits […]

"He's like, 'Do you know who Sakuraba and Josh Barnett are?' […] He said he coached them. My first inclination was that he was full of shit. I'm giving him the time of day because he's an older guy. Even though he's

got cauliflower ears, it's still a big stretch. I wasn't very familiar with catch wrestling […] He left, I got online and found a wiki page on him […] then I was totally intrigued."

The two men had spoken about teaching, but Robinson didn't return for several weeks. Delgado knew where he lived, so knocked on Robinson's door to invite him back. Westside MMA ended up hiring Robinson as a teacher to do a couple of classes a week. "I learned a lot from him. All the power sources of half of what I do with leglocks, comes from him, along with a whole bunch of other things." Robinson passed away in 2014.

In 2010, Hamilton and Delgado were already able to award their first black belt. A lifelong athlete, Hillary Williams said of her father that "If I played two sports and I had time to play a video game, he'd tell me to pick up a new one." She joined Westside MMA in 2006 as a 17 year old. Williams told the Fightworks Podcast:

"*I was one of those angry, hardcore punk kids, back in the day. One of my friends somehow found jiu jitsu and lost about 100lbs in a year doing it. I was between the softball and volleyball seasons, saying 'Oh, I need something to stay in shape'. He said, 'Well, come try my gym'. I watched some of the kickboxing, watched some of the jiu jitsu, and I said 'Ok, kickboxing will do, I'd like to fight kickboxing, but there's no way in hell you're going to get me to roll around on the floor with sweaty men. No way in hell.*

"*At some point in time they talked me into it: my first roll, I got choked by a 12 year old boy in about seven to eight seconds. It intrigued me […] there's something about jiu jitsu, you just want to be good at it. It's so hard, you keep going back until you actually get good at it.*"

Williams reached that level fast, winning IBJJF Pan Ams gold two years in a row at white and then blue belt. By 2009, she had an impressive 54-4 record in competition, 9-8 against men. After yet another gold medal as a purple belt, Williams rose to the rank of brown belt in November 2009. That year, she became the brown belt champion at the IBJJF No Gi Worlds, throwing and defeating the much larger Gabi Garcia en route.

The biggest accolade would come in 2010, when she won the Mundials as a brown belt (the women's division still combined brown and black belts at the time), with a deserved black belt promotion not long after. Sadly for BJJ but fortunately for her future patients, Williams made the decision to concentrate on her medical studies. A woman of many talents (she also speaks fluent Portuguese, having taught herself), Williams remains an excellent role model.

TIMELINE

1998
Delgado moves to Little Rock in Arkansas and starts training with Danny Dring and Matt Hamilton

2006
Hamilton and Delgado found Westside MMA

2006
17 year old Hillary Williams begins training at Westside

2008
Delgado is part of The Ultimate Fighter 8

2010
Hillary Williams wins gold at the Worlds

SOURCES: • BJJHEROES.COM • 'UNLOCKING THE CAGE WITH MATT HAMILTON', MARK TULLIUS • FIGHTERGIRLS.COM • SUBMISSIONCONTROL.COM • THEFIGHTWORKSPODCAST.COM • EATSLEEPGROWREPEAT.COM

OFFICIAL PARTNER

Abu Dhabi GRAND SLAM

Jiu Jitsu World Tour 2016-17

LOS ANGELES
September 3 & 4, 2016
LA Convention Centre,
Los Angeles, USA
GI & NO GI

TOKYO
October 23, 2016
Big Turtle Fukaya,
Saitama, Japan
GI

RIO DE JANEIRO
November 12 & 13, 2016
HSBC Arena,
Rio De janeiro, Brazil
GI & NO GI

ABU DHABI
January 13 & 14, 2017
IPIC Arena,
Abu Dhabi, UAE
GI & NO GI

LONDON
March 18, 2017
Excel, London, UK
GI

Open to ALL nationalities. All Belts, Juveniles, Adults & Masters.
Massive cash prizes and UAEJJF World Ranking Points.

The Journey To Professional
Jiu-Jitsu Has Begun

Win
Cash Prize up to
$ 600,000

For more information visit www.uaejjf.org

www.uaejjf.com | UAE Jiu-Jitsu Federation | @UAEJJF | UAEJJF | @UAEJJF

WORDS: TOM BELL
PICTURES: ANDY DOUGLAS

MARCO CANHA – SMOOTH OPERATOR

A second degree black belt and a direct student of Rico Vieira, Marco Canha is one of the closest to the Checkmat source as they come in the UK.

Known for his silky jiu jitsu and ever-impressive competition team, the London Fight Factory head coach reflects on his journey from Rio to London.

You started as just a teenager. Was it specifically jiu jitsu that you wanted to train, because you first started with Murilo Bustamante when he was a UFC champion?
Yeah, he was. It was just where my friends from school were training and I just saw it as being interesting, but it was already very famous where I was from – I didn't exactly know what it was but I just went along with it.

To be honest, it was becoming very popular and my friends were doing it so I just followed the crowd. It's interesting to look back on because all the guys I trained with from school quit. I think I was the last one to join too.

'Royce's wins in the UFC' is largely acknowledged as being a catalyst in the popularity of jiu jitsu – as someone close to the source, a kid in Rio at that time, was there a change in people's view of jiu jitsu?
When I was very young, I had friends that trained jiu jitsu and every year their team held a gathering. It was held at the Tijuca Tennis Clube and they would always finish with a public demonstration of people attacking you with like, guns and knives – all the old school self-defense stuff.

I thought it was cool, I watched for two years in a row but never did anything about it until maybe two years after that, I had my first session.

So you moved to train with Roberto Traven, 2x ADCC Champion.
A friend of my sister used to train with Traven. The name of the gym was Strike and it was very famous and part of the Alliance team – they were very strong.

"I REMEMBER BEING A BLUE BELT, ME AND MY FRIENDS USED TO THROW DOWN SOME MATS AND THEN RICARDO (VIEIRA), AS A PURPLE BELT, WOULD COME AND DO A CLASS FOR US.

They had like, Alexandre Paiva (one of the founding members of Alliance) and many other great fighters, but they were great with kids in class, it was just much better for me so I moved and trained there.

Traven's record speaks for itself too.
He was the champion of many, many things including the ADCC. It was a great time to start training there. They had a very good competition team and it was so close to my house.

Somebody like Roberto, so decorated and well known, he was a grappler hungry to be the best?
Man, he got his purple belt in just under six months.

You became one of his students, did you want to compete like him?
At yellow belt, I competed in a competition in the gym and I remember one of the guys, Castello Branco, I remember him saying that I was ready to compete and ready to be a yellow belt.

I got handed my yellow belt and got beaten up really bad. But, with Traven, I was very young and I got to blue belt with him. I was never too serious about competing, I enjoyed training and going to the gym. I took my time getting my belts, I wasn't too serious.

Traven moved and for a while it was difficult for us with training. One of his students, Muzio de Angelis took over and that was really great for me.

Muzio, he turned out to be a big influence, too?
Yeah, it was great. I was already really interested in jiu jitsu when Traven left but I think Muzio was very important to me. He used to look after me a lot, give me advice, help and push me in training and competition.

He made me, like, invest myself in jiu jitsu. It was really important for me.

What do you put it down to?
Everything, man. One thing that is very different these days is that people would see their coach as a hero then. You were young, you looked up to them and had a little more respect than people nowadays. I don't think we have the same mentality, in fact we're way different, but we got on very well. He used to look after me.

One thing I regret; it was the way I left his gym. I wasn't mature, I wanted a reason to leave because I wanted to move. Now, as a coach, I regret what I did. I don't regret moving, but I regret how I did it. That is life, we are always learning.

Muzio referees a lot for the IBJJF now. Do you ever see him?
I went on to get my black belt, I didn't compete as a brown belt because I was at university studying advertising. That's where my focus was, my parents always said if I want to invest my life in jiu jitsu then I should get a degree first.

I remember, it was I think my third competition at black belt. I arrived at the venue early and I looked down at my mat and there he was. He was my referee and I thought "Oh sh*t! I don't know what to do!" – we hadn't cleared the air before that.

I had to walk on and shake his hand, people said he would make me lose, but I lost anyway. It was good because after that we talked, he kissed and hugged me and cleared the air.

We're great friends, I call him Uncle and our relationship is great. I am really proud that I managed to get that relationship fixed.

So from Muzio, you moved to train with Ricardo Vieira.
As Strike Gym was part of Alliance, we used to get together and hold camps to go and fight at the Worlds. We would go to internal selection tournaments and the two finalists of each division would represent Alliance. You had to be selected.

We used to get together a lot to compete, so we went to Ricardo's gym where Fabio Gurgel was, Jacare too. I remember being a blue belt, me and my friends used to throw down some mats and then Ricardo, as a purple belt, would come and do a class for us.

"If I had plans to go back to Brazil, I look at my kids, not just my own but the ones who compete for me, and I can't go anywhere until they're at least 18! Once they all get their black belts maybe I'll find myself living by a beach, but until then, I have a mission here."

It was really cool of him and I always liked his teaching. I always felt I learned well from him but I didn't have a reason to leave Muzio, I loved my coach and my club.

How long were you with Ricardo before moving to the UK?
When I left I had been with him close to maybe 3-4 years, but I'd trained with him since blue belt.

What conversation took place that said, "Marco, let's move to the UK."
I'd gone to Spain for the ADCC in 2009. I found myself in Europe with free time. I had no plans and Luiz Manxinha Ribeiro, the owner of London Fight Factory invited me over. He called me out on coming to Europe and not visiting him, so I said I'd do it.

Luiz told me to come to London for a few months and teach for him instead. I said sure, I had graduated, I was doing jiu jitsu and I was free. I didn't have any reason to stay so I went to London until the end of 2009 and in 2010 Luiz called me again and said he wanted me to be head coach, so I did it.

And now you're coaching in the UK and your students have won medals at the Europeans and Nogi Europeans. You have guys who fight every week!
I am proud, but it comes from them. I have a really strong competition team and I think it comes from something I learned from Ricardo. It's the spirit of the team and it's the spirit of competition. It's not something that can be taught in one session or one week, it comes out in people after a while and I have had many good competitors because of it.

I have competitive belts at every level, but to be good they need good team mates. It's not just the adults, I have a very strong kids' competition team as well with guys winning the Kids' Europeans and PanAms. It's probably the biggest kids' competition in the world and I think I owe a lot of that to Ricardo; not everything, but the mentality, the style of teaching and stuff.

To be like Rico, is that a conscious effort?
I think it comes naturally. Every time I have a problem or need advice, I go to him. I don't find myself sitting there and thinking "what would he do?" but everything he says or believes I just find myself agreeing with him all the time. It's really easy and makes for a good connection.

I owe a lot to him, I think. Jiu jitsu has brought a lot of drastic changes in my life and he's part of my jiu jitsu. For me, the most important guys were Muzio and Ricardo.

It must be nice to have such an effortless relationship as a student, that must mean Checkmat, as a team, is in your heart.
Oh man, 150%. I know this would never happen but people could question why you would be so loyal to a team and I'm like "man, it's my coach." If he was Gracie Barra, I would follow, if he was Nova Uniao, I would follow. I know this would never happen but he created my team, he created my mentality, him and Leo, they're my team.

Let's talk about your jiu jitsu now. You have those snake hips and some of the smoothest jiu jitsu in the UK.
Being flexible has always been something I've been since I was young. I remember being a blue belt and I wouldn't tap to arm bars. People would tell me I would feel it when I'm older and I would regret it but it's like a gift. I'm lucky, it doesn't just help when I escape, but in passing guard.

I like to use the hips and the legs to confuse a guy. I watch a lot of people give up control of a person's upper body to control the legs with their hands but I like to use my legs to fight the legs, to use my legs and be smarter with them than the other guy. I like to use my legs as a second pair of hands.

You keep that style sharp now by training with a lot of good guys, not only your own students and black belts but guys like Max Campos, Edu Goncalves, Luiz Tosta ...
It's true. I tell you what, one of the guys who has helped me so much since I moved here was Max Campos from Oxford Shootfighters. We've known each other a long time, since Brazil, where we both used to be team mates at Checkmat. We even competed together for the Nationals team and became really good friends.

I bumped into him in Brazil and he asked why I don't compete so much and I told him I found it difficult to train as hard as I wanted to for competition and teaching at the same time.

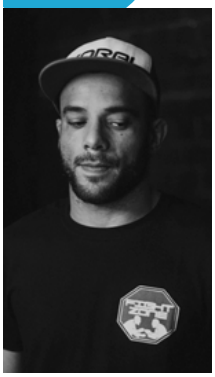
It was different, back in Brazil, we would train for competition at Fightzone and there would be 15-20 black belts on the mat, then a bunch of brown belts. It was crazy, so here for me it couldn't be that way. We wanted to do something about it so in 2012, we got together so we didn't let our own training slow down and to be honest it pushed me and some of the other guys to compete again.

You've now been here almost seven years. How much do you feel London is truly your home?
Definitely, it's my home now. I never wanted to come here permanently at first but since I have been here, it's definitely home for me.

If I had plans to go back to Brazil, I look at my kids, not just my own but the ones who compete for me, and I can't go anywhere until they're at least 18! Once they all get their black belts maybe I'll find myself living by a beach, but until then, I have a mission here.

MARCO CANHA

Marco is a black belt under Ricardo Vieira and London Fightzone head coach



"I remember being a blue belt and I wouldn't tap to arm bars. People would tell me I would feel it when I'm older and I would regret it but it's like a gift."

DOMINATE THE MAT

Hayabusa is dedicated to bringing the best products to athletes so they can train harder and perform better. With meticulously crafted designs using premium materials and state of the art manufacturing, you can expect perfection when you roll in Hayabusa.

GOORUDO 3

SHINJU 3

HAYABUSA®

HAYABUSAFIGHT.CO.UK

WORDS: CALLUM MEDCRAFT
PICTURES: JOSH HALVATZIS

SWISS BANKING, CAGE FIGHTING & EXCLUSIVE BJJ CAMPS

A Swiss banker, underground MMA fighter, academy owner, entrepreneur and driving force behind the most exclusive BJJ camps in the business: it's fair to say Augusto Frota lives a crazy life.

We caught up with the elusive Minotauro Nogueira black belt to discuss his arrival in Switzerland by way of Brazil and the USA, organising jiu jitsu camps with the best athletes in the world and his highflying lifestyle.

Hi Frota, great to finally talk to you! Tell us a little bit about your background and how you ended up meeting and training with Minotauro Nogueira?
So I started to train in Brazil back in 1995 with Admilson Brites, who is a black belt under Royler Gracie. I had already started with my academic commitments at this time and was studying international business.

Soon after that I moved to Fort Lauderdale in America to carry on my studies. While in America I met Marcus Aurelio, the former Pride FC champion, so I was able to carry on my training with him at American Top Team. I then met Minotauro Nogueira around 2000, and I received my purple, brown and black belts from him. I really respect lineage, so every time I had to move locations I listened to my previous teachers to tell me where was the best place to then go and train.

And it was Minotauro who also introduced you to MMA?
Yes he did, and this was the early days of MMA, especially in Europe. Back then if you were an MMA fighter, generally it was because your father did MMA before you, or you were a criminal (laughs). Nowadays there's so many Facebook wannabes, people who will have one safe fight to make sure they have a nice profile picture, you know? In my day, you really needed to have a desire to fight, so I'd compare one fight in my day to five fights now.

"WE HAVE FLORIAN PICASSO, WHO IS THE GREAT-GRANDSON OF PICASSO, AND HE COMES TO TRAIN WITH US. WE ALSO HAVE THE FIRST CEO FROM EBAY, JEFF SKOLL, WHO ALSO TRAINS"

Amazing stuff, so how did you then arrive in Switzerland?
So, once I graduated, I came to Switzerland as I was offered a job in Swiss banking. That was also the time that I was fighting in professional MMA, as Nogueira put me to fight in Holland.

Wow, that's crazy, so you were working in Swiss banking by day, then fighting MMA by night?
Haha, yes it was. So I started working in trading at UBS, then private banking for City Bank; all of this was going on while I was fighting. I was actually in the news back in Brazil because people couldn't understand why someone who had gained a good career within Swiss banking would want to be fighting MMA.

In fact, in the beginning I wasn't accepted within MMA because people thought I was a playboy who couldn't fight. I was then also going to work and people would question if I really had a degree and why a brawler wanted to be a banker.

It was a hard time actually, because when I arrived in Switzerland with both of these lives in full swing, I had no family or friends really yet and was trying to settle in a new country. It was a crazy time, but there you go.

Now you have your own fantastic academy, so you did manage to settle in Switzerland eventually?
Yeah, my academy actually started more by accident. Back when I arrived in the country, my level of jiu jitsu was higher than people at the other academies, which meant that I actually got banned from a few places. I started to train at judo academies, traditional ju jitsu academies and I even picked up Muay Thai.

Eventually my first few students and me started to put on classes, but for the first three years it was actually costing me money. We didn't have enough people training to pay the rent, so I had to invest. My brother came over to teach and we started Frota Team, put on more classes to make things grow. In the end my brother left back for Brazil, but the academy continued to grow.

Do you teach most of the time now, or do you currently have other professional responsibilities?
I have my own public limited company, which covers sport, media and music. So from the sport perspective we have Frota academy, our private BJJ camps and then also a clothing brand. We also run HIT FC, which is an MMA event, so all of this comes under our sports umbrella. We also handle music brokerage for DJ bookings and stuff like that in South America. So we cover all sorts of stuff really.

Being based in Zurich, we imagine you have an interesting group of students who come through the doors at the academy?
We have Florian Picasso, who is the great-grandson of Picasso, and he comes to train with us. We also have the first CEO from eBay, Jeff Skoll, who also comes to train once a month when he's visiting his home in Zurich. We also have a lot of Sheikhs and high profile executives coming through the doors.

Having worked within the banking world and met lots of wealthy, influential people, I quickly realised they wouldn't get the right impression of jiu jitsu if the academy wasn't a nice place to visit, so I decided it's important that our academy is a nice place to visit and train.

So in keeping with your academy, you've created the most amazing BJJ camps for people to attend. They don't come cheap, so tell us a little about your thinking behind them?
Well, first of all, I wanted to organise the camps because of my hyperactivity. I like to travel, but after an hour on the beach I am always bored and looking for something to do. I started to realise that I have lots of close friends who are fighters, so why not mix together jiu jitsu and travel via these camps?

I created the environment with the camps to cater for specific groups of people, many of who are clients or people I've met through business. Every location we visit is either hosted in an amazing house or a five star hotel. We have lined up camps in Ibiza, Bali, Cannes and St. Barts – with more to come. For these sort of locations, I know I need to bring in the best jiu jitsu fighters in the world, which isn't cheap, but there's a demand for it.

For our next camp I made phone calls and sold out the entire trip in 30 minutes – it's €2,000 for a three-hour seminar. Most of the customers are bankers, lawyers or CEO's from companies, so there's a market for this. We bring the best fighters, set it all up in the best locations and make it a truly exclusive event.

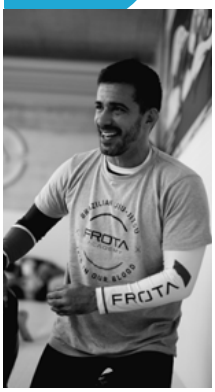
It's interesting to see that jiu jitsu is becoming a popular pastime in high-powered corperate circles?
Yes, this is very true. I have actually done speeches at five different companies in Switzerland, which have all been about raising the awareness of jiu jitsu and the benefits it gives us. People who do jiu jitsu understand how much it can benefit your lives.

You know, 500 years ago, people would have to move around all day and burn both mental and physical energy to survive, to hunt for food and keep safe. Nowadays, we don't have to do anything to eat, so I believe there's a big discrepancy between the amount of physical and mental energy most people use day to day. This leads to depression, bad eating habits, low libido and everything else. So I believe sports, not just jiu jitsu, are so important for people if they want to remain healthy.

You have a very interesting life, Augusto!
Haha, and ask the guys that come to the camp, they will also tell you that Augusto likes to have fun. We do it all the right way, man. I like to party, so the camps are a good mix of training and then the other good things in life.

Where can people find out more about your upcoming schedule of BJJ camps?
If you visit ***www.bjj-mma-camps.com*** you can find our full list of events for the year. We have amazing locations and lots of awesome fighters for the seminars, and I'm making sure they're all going to be events you won't want to miss.

AUGUSTO FROTA
Augusto is a black belt under the legendary Minotauro Nogueira



"I started working in trading at UBS, then private banking for City Bank; all of this was going on while I was fighting. I was actually in the news back in Brazil because people couldn't understand why someone who had gained a good career within Swiss banking would want to be fighting MMA."

HER CALLING

MACKENZIE DERN

In conversation with the top female black belt fighter promoting jiu jitsu to the masses.

Pictures: Flavio Scorsato
Words: Callum Medcraft

MACKENZIE

MACKENZIE

"IF I CAN HELP PROMOTE JIU JITSU IN MMA AND TO THE WORLD, AND MY LOOKS HELP ME, THEN I'M FINE WITH THAT"

As practitioners of the art, the likes of Marcus Almeida, Leandro Lo and Felipe Pena are not strangers. We champion these athletes, we aspire to be like them and – let's face it – we are star-struck in their presence. Within our world, they are gods amongst mortals, but jiu jitsu is still an amateur sport, frantically attempting to establish mainstream appeal. However, with close to 300,000 followers on Instagram, the world's leading MMA organisations awaiting her signature and lucrative sponsorship endorsements under her belt, Mackenzie Dern is breaking through the ceiling.

Still only 23 years-old and with her whole career laid out in front of her, the world really is Mackenzie Dern's oyster. The past two years have seen the young American / Brazilian obliterate all-comers within competitive jiu jitsu – claiming titles, winning super fights and gaining an unprecedented level of popularity along the way. In fact, few would argue that she is one of the most 'famous' jiu jitsu fighters outside of the jiu jitsu community right now.

"It's kind of crazy to think that I'm a jiu jitsu fighter, but I can feel that it's bigger than jiu jitsu now," explains Dern. "Of course, I always dreamt to be a world champion and to have lots of success in my life, but I could never have expected all the attention I've been getting outside of jiu jitsu. For sure, my path into MMA has given me exposure in another area, but it's surreal to hear people making comparisons between me and girls like Ronda Rousey. I've barely even fought MMA, so that's really crazy to hear.

"I guess there are lots of guys and girls that are successful in jiu jitsu, but it's crazy how things have been going for me over the last few years. I don't know if it's a combination of my success as a fighter and also being a marketable girl, but things have definitely hit a whole new level for me that I didn't expect.

"I don't know, I think maybe people can relate to me a little bit and the way I like to compete. I am always having fun, always smiling and I have so many people who aren't even on my team come up and wish me good luck, which is just so nice."

Ok, so let's address the elephant in the room. Prowess as an elite fighter aside, there's no doubt that Mackenzie's looks and general online persona have helped raise her mainstream profile. As a beautiful, charismatic young woman and talented athlete, her marketability is like no other in the jiu jitsu world. For Mackenzie, the whole process will be a balancing act. She's a fighter first and foremost, but people will always gravitate towards focusing on her looks.

"It's funny really. I mean, look at Tayane (Porfirio), no one wants to talk about how good her jiu jitsu is, they just focus on her size," says Dern on her growing profile. "For me, some people say I only get attention because of the way I look. I guess people will focus on whatever they want, but I don't have anything to prove as a fighter and I am by no means done yet.

"I believe Kyra (Gracie) did a lot of good in marketing jiu jitsu outside of the community, and my goal is to keep doing that as well. If I can help promote jiu jitsu in MMA and to the world, and my looks help me, then I'm fine with that. I want more girls to do martial arts, and a big stumbling block can be that they don't want to enter an environment full of guys and lose their femininity, but we all know jiu jitsu is for everyone.

"I understand that the way you look can be a powerful marketing tool, but you always have to back it up with what you do, so I always train hard and keep working to be a successful fighter - my results speak for themselves. I think the following I have online now is bigger than just jiu jitsu, so I understand that not everyone is going to appreciate what I do, that's just life."

And for Mackenzie, life was always going to be based around jiu jitsu. Her father, Wellington 'Megaton' Dias, is a black belt under Royler Gracie and a legend in his own right. Megaton emigrated to the USA from his native Brazil, choosing to start up his academy in Arizona, where he now trains and teaches alongside his daughter.

"Some of my biggest memories as a kid are of my dad taking me to the academy and putting a movie on for me while he was teaching class," says Mackenzie nostalgically. "I'd be sat there watching *The little Mermaid* or something, but I'd still be listening in to him teaching. He'd always put me in a gi, but never push me to do the class, so I'd just hear him shouting, 'hip escapes, pass the guard' or whatever.

"I've always been around it. A lot of kids learn to wake up, brush your teeth, you go to school and that's how it works. For me, I'd come home from school and go to jiu jitsu. That was just my routine and what I became used to."

Growing up on the mats under the guidance of her father, Mackenzie's love for the art was cultivated at an extremely young age. As you'd expect of the daughter of an elite athlete, it wasn't long before the young Mackenzie was testing her skills on the competition tatami.

"I was six when I entered my first competition and I always loved going along to the tournaments," states Dern. "My dad would introduce me to all these famous fighters like Leo and Ricardo Vieira, Comprido and people like that. I remember feeling like my dad was famous, I thought he was a super-hero."

As time passed, Mackenzie's love for jiu jitsu never dwindled, and she continued to train regularly all the way through her schooling. Her love for competition went hand in hand with stellar results, and she was crowned world champion for the first time in 2008 at the blue belt level.

Life continued to revolve around training, teaching and travelling to compete alongside her father, making multiple trips to Europe and racking up major IBJJF titles. By the time Mackenzie was awarded her black belt, her trophy cabinet boasted world and European championship gold medals at every single belt, leaving the community chomping at the bit to see her mix it with the elite fighters at faixa preta.

The jump to black belt is a tough one, no matter what your credentials are, but Mackenzie was quickly putting pressure on the women who'd been doing it at the highest level for years. Though she'd yet to get the better of the likes of Michelle Nicolini on the world circuit, Mackenzie was invited to the 2013 ADCC in China based on her excellent performances. However, the starlet was set to suffer the first big setback of her career.

"I was going to fight the ADCC in China when I tore my ACL," says Mackenzie. "I had just got my black belt and I was doing well already at competitions, but then this big injury came along and really put the brakes on.

"Looking at that injury now, I think it helped me. Before that, I was doing so well that I didn't really think I needed to change anything in my training. In the four and a half months of rehab I really evolved my jiu jitsu so much as well, as I had to play on top more and move outside of my comfort zone. So, yeah, that surgery and time out was something that actually really helped to evolve my game. Sitting out and watching people try stuff you've never even considered was really cool for me.

"So my confidence started to come back and quickly I started to find a rhythm. I think once you've found a rhythm and you're feeling good at the competitions, it can really throw off your opponent. I am really happy with the success that I've had so far."

"I THINK BEATING GABI IN ABU DHABI WAS SUCH A HUGE CHANGE FOR ME, AND MAYBE THE WHOLE JIU JITSU COMMUNITY. I HOPE IT INSPIRED A LOT OF PEOPLE TO COMPETE IN THE ABSOLUTE DIVISIONS AND TO ALWAYS HAVE HOPE AND TO NEVER GIVE UP"

Coming back from a difficult injury and achieving success, at such a young age, is testament to how mature and talented Dern really is. We've witnessed her go from strength to strength and emerge as the dominant force within her weight division. On top of that, fans have been treated to a number of high profile clashes with the most decorated female grappler of all time, Gabi Garcia.

"I guess fighting Gabi (Garcia) really started at the Worlds Nogi in 2014," says Mackenzie in reflection. "She submitted me of course, but for like, one second, I got a little triangle on her and that gave a little bit of excitement for everyone. I then fought her at the Europeans where I almost took her back, which was exciting for everyone again. I think in a short period of time I ended up fighting her five or six times, and each time I did something that maybe gave people watching a little bit of hope."

The sight of tiny Mackenzie Dern taking on colossus Gabi Garcia, who was easily twice her size, quickly became the highlight of any event the pair entered. Every time they faced off, Dern seemed to do just a little bit better, and it wasn't long before she pulled off one of the biggest upsets jiu jitsu has ever seen.

"Even though Gabi was still submitting me, I think people like to see you have fun, go out there and give your best," says Dern on her approach to facing Gabi. "So, when it came to Abu Dhabi in 2015, it was my first time cutting down to the -55kg division and I was the smallest I'd ever been. I remember thinking, 'I am definitely going to have to fight Gabi and I'm the smallest I've ever been' (laughs).

"I think beating Gabi in Abu Dhabi was such a huge change for me, and maybe the whole jiu jitsu community. I hope it inspired a lot of people to compete in the absolute divisions and to always have hope and to never give up. I fought Gabi so many times, but eventually I had my day. It was crazy actually because I fought Gabi in the semi-final so I was really worried about losing the final after spending so much energy and adrenalin."

Following on from her WPJJC success of 2015, Mackenzie went on to submit Michelle Nicolini in the final of the IBJJF World championships, cementing her status as the No.1 female jiu jitsu athlete. The 2016 IBJJF Worlds saw Mackenzie retain her title, once again submitting Nicolini, and leaving the community wondering what more she could achieve in the sport?

"I'm not saying jiu jitsu wasn't challenging me, because it really was, and there is a whole group of new brown belts ready to start making their name," explains Mackenzie on her current move towards MMA. "I definitely miss the adrenalin buzz, which I just don't get from competing in jiu jitsu anymore.

"I have also accomplished my goals in jiu jitsu, and I think to train really hard you need to be motivated. I love to train, but to keep to a hard routine I personally need clear goals. Every day at the academy started to feel the same. It was still fun, but I wasn't getting the buzz I was looking for.

"I am young now, I'm still 23, and there's still not that many girls fighting MMA. I had been training MMA to help my jiu jitsu for around a year before my first fight, so I just felt like it was a good time for me to get into the sport. I have really enjoyed learning new striking combinations, trying them out in sparring and just feeling like a white belt again!"

With her grappling ability as good as it gets, and with age on her side, there's no doubt Mackenzie has all the tools she'll ever need to forge a successful career inside the cage. That said, jiu jitsu purists can relax knowing that she doesn't seem ready to leave competitive grappling completely just yet.

"I'm still not ready to stop competing in jiu jitsu completely, Mackenzie beams. "I know a lot of people stop jiu jitsu all together to focus on MMA, but I still plan on doing the ADCC next year and any other opportunities that come up. MMA has been a really exciting challenge for me though and I am very motivated by that at the moment."

July 22nd 2016 saw Mackenzie make her debut for Legacy Fighting Championship, where she went on to win in dominant style by unanimous decision. Considering it was her first MMA outing, and there was plenty of media generated heat surrounding the jiu jitsu world champ's debut, she handled the fight impeccably. But, the big question was, 'did she find the adrenalin buzz she was looking for?'

"(Laughs) Honestly, I didn't," says Mackenzie. "I was expecting so much more adrenalin when I got in there, but to be honest I was more anxious before when trying to make weight! That whole 'making weight' process was much more of an adrenalin rush. It's crazy really that I was more relaxed for the actual fight, because the girl was going to be trying to hurt me. It just felt like I was fighting at the world championships, which is something that I'm used to.

"People say it's different when you fight in the UFC for the first time and that the nerves really do sink in then. So hopefully, one day, I'll get to fight in the UFC and I can put that to the test. I believe I'll make my UFC debut in 2017 – that's the goal."

Having added a submission victory over Montana Stewart to her record at *Legacy 61* via a move Mackenzie described as a 'chokoplata', all the signs are there that she's on course to find herself in the UFC sooner rather than later. As all great champions do, Dern has surrounded herself with current UFC athletes as training partners, as well as securing the guidance of the former lightweight champion, Benson Henderson.

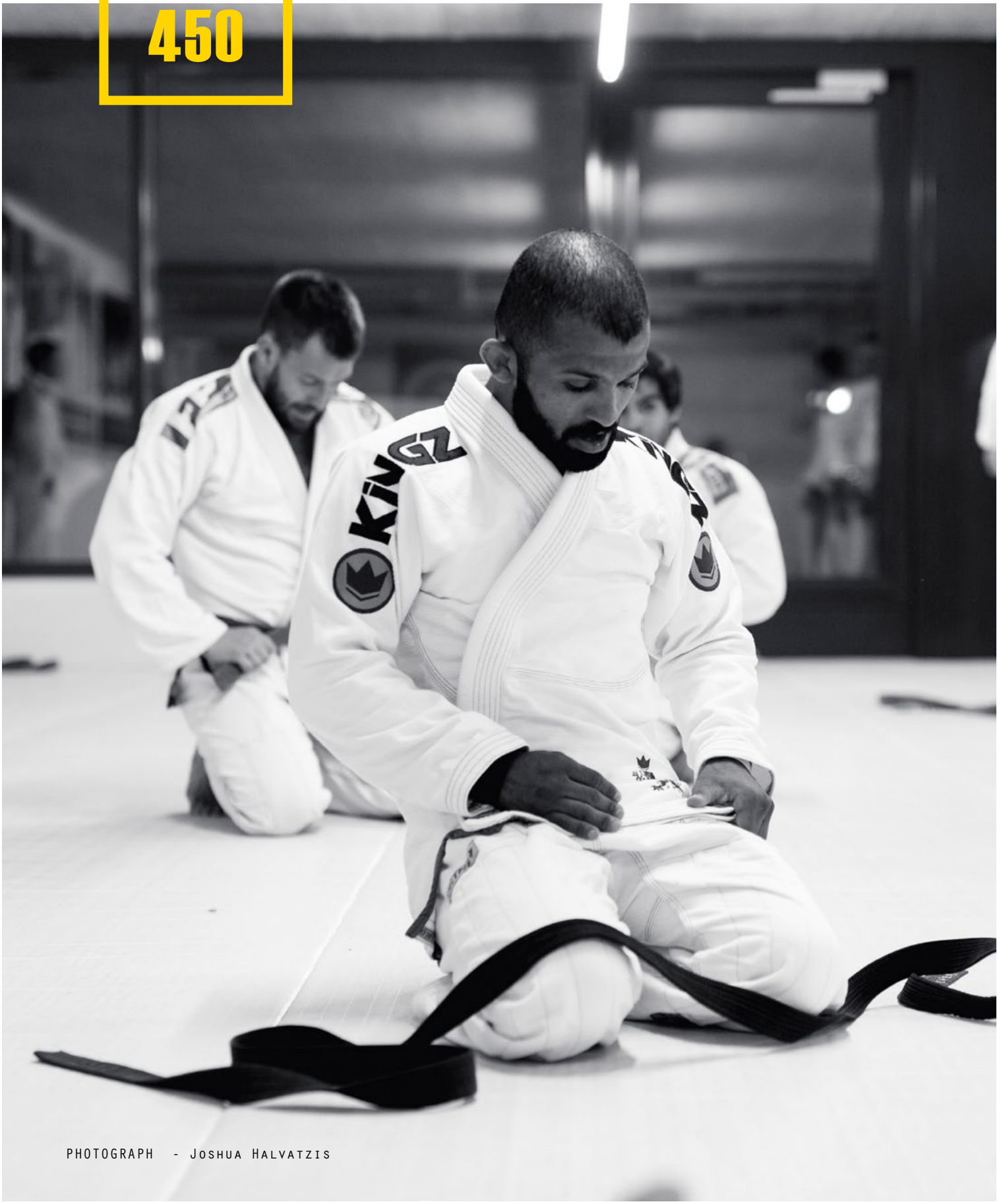
"Yeah, so maybe that's part of the reason why it felt so normal when it came to fighting, because my team is amazing," says Mackenzie. "When we spar, I'll stay in the middle for three rounds and each round a new opponent comes in to fight. The girls I train with are already in the UFC, so I am way more nervous when it comes to sparring days than anything else."

With so much success coming her way over the last two years, Mackenzie must now prepare herself for the potentially life-altering two years that lie in front of her. With the likes of Joe Rogan talking-up her profile online, thousands of new fans following her every week and the UFC set firmly in her sights, we could be looking at the grappler who takes jiu jitsu exposure to the next level.

"I know I'm doing the right things though and I'm thinking big. I hope to be the UFC champion in two years, in the jiu jitsu hall of fame and promoting the sport outside of the community, like Ronda Rousey. I definitely see myself with the UFC title, defending the title a few times and who knows, maybe when I retire, come back to competing in jiu jitsu and starting a family, winning a few more world titles as a mom! That's the goal!"

COMP 450

KINGZ EUROPE



PHOTOGRAPH - Joshua Halvatzis

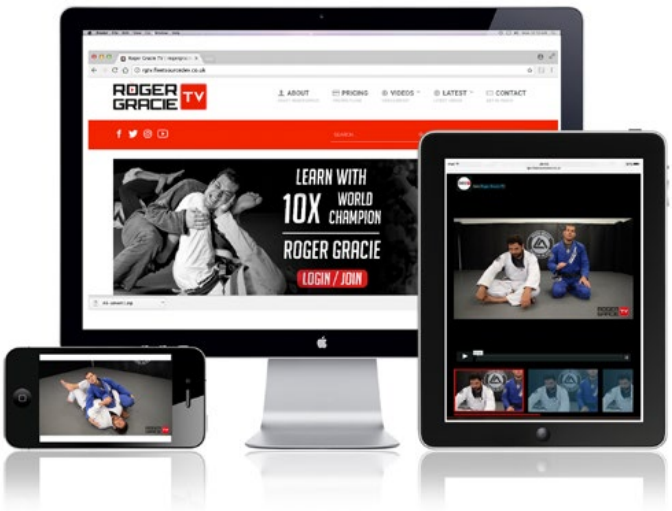
ROGER GRACIE TV

USERS BENEFIT FROM:

A GROWING DATABASE OF TECHNIQUE TUTORIALS AND SPARRING SESSIONS WITH ROGER GRACIE

SELF-DEFENCE AND 'OLD SCHOOL' CURRICULUM WITH MAURICIO GOMES

INSTANT ACCESS TO CONTENT ON YOUR COMPUTER, SMARTPHONE OR TABLET



WWW.ROGERGRACIETV.COM

SIGN UP NOW FOR LAUNCH DATE
NEWS & EARLY DISCOUNT CODES

LEARN FROM THE MOST DECORATED JIU JITSU FIGHTER IN HISTORY

The fourteen-year-old had come to Andre Pederneiras' Nova Uniao academy seeking revenge. He wanted payback for lying helpless on the ground, defeated by the bigger kid he had just fought in the park. He sat on the mats on his first day of jiu jitsu class with his back against a corner, nervous and eager to learn the gentle art.

WORDS: FELIX RODRIGUEZ

PICTURES: ANDY DOUGLAS

SHAOLIN RIBEIRO

His skinny legs were crossed, with both feet stretched over his calves in the lotus position. He didn't know anyone at the academy so he figured he'd sit like he was meditating until someone noticed him. "Hey look at the kid, he looks like one of those Shaolin monks!" joked one of the boy's new teammates.

And just like that his nickname was born. From that day forward Shaolin is how most jiu jitsu lovers have come to know Vitor Ribeiro; one of the most electrifying athletes to have stepped on the mats in the last 20 years of BJJ competition. *Jiu Jitsu Style* sat with Shaolin to discuss his journey from wanting a vendetta, to finding vocation through Brazilian jiu jitsu. This is his story.

LUTA LIVRE: A LIFE-CHANGING BEATING

Shaolin grew up loving combat sports in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. While most kids in Rio would spend their free time playing futbol on the pitch, taking turns shooting penalties while pretending to be Romario and Taffarel, Shaolin and his friends liked pretending to be Royce Gracie mowing down opponents in the UFC. He found jiu jitsu after being overwhelmed in one of his matches against a bigger opponent with an understanding of grappling. According to Shaolin, that "ass-kicking" was a blessing in disguise.

"When I was a teenager I spent about eight months training Judo, Taekwando and other styles that were very popular back in the day [circa 1993]. At that same time, Royce Gracie was doing amazing here [in the UFC], so my friends and I being teenagers, we would copy the UFC a little bit and have fights at a park. We'd choose two guys, put gloves on, make some rules, get in a circle, and then our way of playing would be to fight. Sometimes the fights would get really intense. One of us would land a big takedown, a big punch or a big kick and things would really get tense.

"One day, when I was 14, I was fighting with a friend of mine, and it was fun; I won that one, but then I fought with another guy that was a little older and a little heavier, he did a style called Luta Livre. That style was very popular and was a really big rival to jiu jitsu at that time. He kicked my ass really bad. Later that day, I had a friend who did capoeira that I used to ride skateboards with, he told me, 'look, man; you have to learn some ground,' so I went and found a BJJ academy that day."

Shaolin's friend had recommended Andre 'Dede' Pederneiras' Nova Uniao, which was still a little academy at the time. Vitor was determined to give the Luta Livre kid his come-uppance so he started training immediately. He noted: "When I started training, there wasn't a free trial for two classes, no week free or any free monthly trials, you went and you signed up as a student. That's what I did, the first day I was starting to learn a couple of moves, then

"If I lost I always knew that something I did wasn't correct: I could have pushed myself harder, I could have woken up a little earlier, shown up to an extra training, done two classes a day, I could have started training wrestling. There's always something more I could do if I lost to make myself better."

I was totally lost for a few weeks, until I started connecting techniques. Then I did my first competition after two months, as a yellow belt, and I got my first congratulations from some adults and I felt so in love with the art of jiu jitsu that I never stopped training.

"It's funny because I started [training] to get payback and jiu jitsu became my passion and what I love. I really enjoyed being surrounded by the guys from the team and my coach. [Nova Uniao] was a really small school back then so we had a lot of individual attention from Dede, and we were all very close. We did a lot of things together, me, him, and a couple of other students that he had. It was a very fun time that started in March of 1993."

DEDE TEACHES PATIENCE TO THE MONK

Shaolin is as throwback as they come. He is old school to the core when it comes to loyalty and commitment to your instructor and teammates. He began his training under Andre 'Dede' Pederneiras and continues to call him his master and mentor to this day. Dede taught Vitor enough skills to become one of the most successful lightweight competitors of all time. Of all the skills Shaolin picked up from Dede he believes patience was the most important one of them all.

"Patience. Patience was such an important thing to learn for a guy like me, 'specially when I was around 15 to 16 years old because I wanted to be good and I wanted to be good fast. Sometimes I tried going too fast and I'd get broken a little bit, sometimes I didn't have the right attitude. Dede taught me to use the power I started getting and the knowledge I started gaining in a better way.

"Also, as a team member he taught me to be patient, to wait for my turn to do things and not try to jump ahead and try to take someone else's turn to do things. He taught me to be patient, not just in learning jiu jitsu, but also to be patient as a person and not seek retribution if someone does something bad to you. If you know Dede personally you'll know that he's a very calm guy that leads by example. Definitely having patience was the biggest lesson I got from him. He didn't tell me, 'This is how you become patient,' he showed me with his attitude and with how he leads his life."

Dede became an example for Shaolin on and off the mats, and the student continues to admire and praise his teacher to this day. "People know Dede, and they want to be close to him because of his image and his positivity. Dede went through hell in his personal life. He started teaching very early; he lost his father and had to be the man of the house. He went through all this adversity and still became a very successful coach, a great man and husband. I know Dede very well and respect him a lot. Renzo I don't know as well. I know him as a friend, but at the same time I see a lot of the same qualities I admire of Dede in Renzo," said Ribeiro.

Learning patience from Dede was important for Shaolin because it helped him to stay motivated and keep coming back, despite the challenges. Although he never thought about quitting, his patience was taken to the limit early and often in his martial arts journey.

He recalls, "I remember when I was a blue belt there was this guy that would always take my back, no matter what, and it was so frustrating because he always ended on my back and would submit me. The guy stopped training and didn't come back for a little while because he was doing other things, and then he'd come back, but the whole time I never stopped training. At some point I realised that I'd hit some walls and some plateaus, problems with my training, but as long as I kept believing 'I'm doing the right thing', I'll overcome things. I'll become like water and eventually push through the biggest wall. Water can be contained for a little bit, but it will find the smallest crack and make its way through it if given enough time, so I knew I had to be persistent and patient. He stopped taking my back."

Shaolin doesn't believe in quitting, and is unapologetic when discussing the quitter mentality that leads people to stop training before earning a black belt. He had the following to say on this topic: "It's not easy, but if it were easy nobody would give the value to the belt, to the stripe or to the submission. I still remember the first submission I ever did. I was so happy because it was a Kimura on a guy that was bigger than me. That value came from the time I spent on the mat and the time my instructor spent with me. I think that if people learn that appreciation for the time invested in yourself by your instructor, whenever they find a problem, instead of quitting they will think, 'man this guy spent so much time with me teaching me, I think I owe him the effort of showing him I can try, and that fixing the problem is doable.

"Instead of getting frustrated because you're not getting better ask yourself what you can do to be better. Don't quit, set out to accomplish and every day you'll be closer to solving the puzzle. Jiu jitsu is not meant to be easy. We're not meant to understand somebody being on top of you on the floor trying to attack you and hurt you. This is not natural and it takes training to make you used to it, training takes time. You have to commit yourself to that work ethic and sacrifice, that's the thing. You have to already have those values; I cannot teach that, I can only help you develop that. People that don't have these values are the ones that quit because they can't develop them if they are not there. They are the ones that say, 'Oh I got hurt, I'm gonna quit,' because of this or that, they try to find an excuse to not train. It's like any quitter, they do exactly the same all the time, and they find an excuse to quit."

SHAOLIN STYLE: BLACK BELT AT 17

Shaolin is a legend in BJJ competition. The fifth-degree black belt is a three-time IBJJF World Champion, he won the Brazilian Nationals twice and he's amassed a 20-5 record in MMA, among other accolades. Shaolin's meteoric rise as a black belt competitor began when he was 17 years old; less than four years after stepping on the mats for the first time. Vitor came up in the mid-1990s and this period in BJJ competition is widely regarded as the Golden Era of the sport. During this period of heated rivalries and closely

"PATIENCE. PATIENCE WAS SUCH AN IMPORTANT THING TO LEARN FOR A GUY LIKE ME"

guarded trade secrets it was more uncommon for someone to earn a black belt in four years or less than it is today. Actually, it was pretty much unheard of. Shaolin was under a lot of scrutiny, the type of scrutiny that would make lesser people buckle when facing that type of pressure. Not Shaolin though. In his own words, he put enough pressure on himself to make outsiders' opinions irrelevant.

He noted, "As a brown belt I competed against a black belt and I beat him when I was 17 years-old. Dede told me, 'Hey, man; he's got two arms and two legs just like you so what can he do to you that you don't know?' At some point I just decided to believe, you know? I think that these days people have too many concerns, they try too hard, too much Google, too much YouTube, I think they're thinking too much. All I needed was one person to say 'Hey, go over there and do your best.' I didn't need to ask 'Hey, do you think I'm good, do you think I deserve this belt?' I didn't care about what others would think, I just cared about what the person who promoted me thought and I wanted to win and show that if he put me under the spotlight I was going to shine.

"Believe me I shone a few times, but I also lost a few times too. When I lost, I took those losses well. I was never the guy that would say or think that I lost because my coach doesn't know anything and then went to switch schools. I never was that type of son of a b***h. If I lost I always knew that something I did wasn't correct: I could have pushed myself harder, I could have woken up a little earlier, shown up to an extra training, done two classes a day, I could have started training wrestling. There's always something more I could do if I lost to make myself better. When you get those questions in your head of what you could have done better you have to find those answers because you'll have the same results until you do. I was there to try and change those results and improve my performance always. The black belt is just a belt, it didn't add extra pressure. Royce Gracie said it best, it covers two inches of your ass, you are responsible for the rest."

Shaolin began competing as a black belt and encountered some humbling lessons early in his campaign. "I got my black belt in October of 1996. I was 17, and a few months short of my 18th birthday, but I got my black belt at 17. I don't think it added more pressure because I have always been the type of guy that puts pressure on myself without help from outside. As soon as I started doing well in some competitions I was working as hard as I could. I never was the guy you'd need to call in the morning and tell to go run, lift weights or to watch my diet and eat clean. I was always one of the guys that were a step ahead regarding all these things I had to do to perform well. I was training more than the guys, I was lifting early, I was running when no one was running.

"My belt didn't come with more pressure because I was preparing myself for three years and a half so that I was ready for the moment when it was time to wear the black belt and deal with all the pressure. My first fight [as a black belt] was against Leo Vieira and he smashed me. This gave me tons of motivation to improve a little bit my game and change things that I had to change to make sure I improved against him and other people. I never put the belt on and stressed about what others thought because Dede gave it to me, and if he thought I was ready at such a young age, he knew I could handle the pressure, I could handle the guys I competed with, and I could handle myself.

"I had so much trust in him so if he thought so, I believed I earned it and that eliminated any pressure from the outside. The pressure I put on myself was to try to be the best, to try to be a world champion, and to be a great partner in training. That's the pressure I put on myself and maybe some of the people around me didn't understand so well in the beginning. They thought there's no reason to push yourself so hard because they didn't understand what I was trying to accomplish. I've always had a clear set of goals and a strong work ethic. You have to arrive on time and be the last one to leave the mat when you're training, you can't complain about partner training," said Ribeiro.

Shaolin has never been one to make excuses; he took the Vieira loss much like the Luta Livre loss. He treated both as learning lessons where he found weaknesses he needed to improve on. Vitor recalls how losing to Leozinho made him even more determined to succeed, even if it ruffled some feathers at the gym: "I guess that sometimes being hard on myself meant being hard on other people too, but when I was in a competition, losing or winning, I was always in good shape, I never lost because of being out of shape or being a mess partying instead of training, you know? I was never smoking, drinking or doing cocaine. It was never about the title as much as it was the feeling of winning. It's winning States, it's winning Worlds, it's winning a chess game even. It's the feeling of winning a bet, a dare, whatever we were training at that mattered to me. That's pretty much what happened to me, I never felt pressure about the belt, I felt pressure always to not lose.

"There were some things I grew up seeing my coach doing, that I tried to do the same, and some people would be like, 'Hey, I don't want to train so hard today, but my mentality is if you come to the class you commit to it. You have to do the warm up, you have to do the drilling, you can't say no to the higher belts. I believed these things and I couldn't allow myself to be soft in my thinking. I really thought that to be a world champion I had to be hard on myself, because if I wasn't holding myself accountable who was going to be hard on me when I didn't do the right things?"

Coming Up In The Golden Era

Imagine a time when Marcelo Garcia, Terere, Jacare, and Roger Gracie were regularly sharing mat space in tournaments…. welcome to the Golden Era of BJJ. Shaolin made his bones as a competitor during this period, swimming in one of the deepest shark tanks known in the history of BJJ competition. He recalls those times fondly: "The Golden Era was amazing. It was so special because everything was pretty new still for everyone; almost nobody spoke English! I remember fighting the first Pans in Redondo Beach in 1995 as a blue belt, in 1996 the IBJJF did the first World Championship where you could see American and Japanese competitors arriving there, asking who is this guy and who is that guy, while the people like me who didn't speak English had no clue what they were talking about.

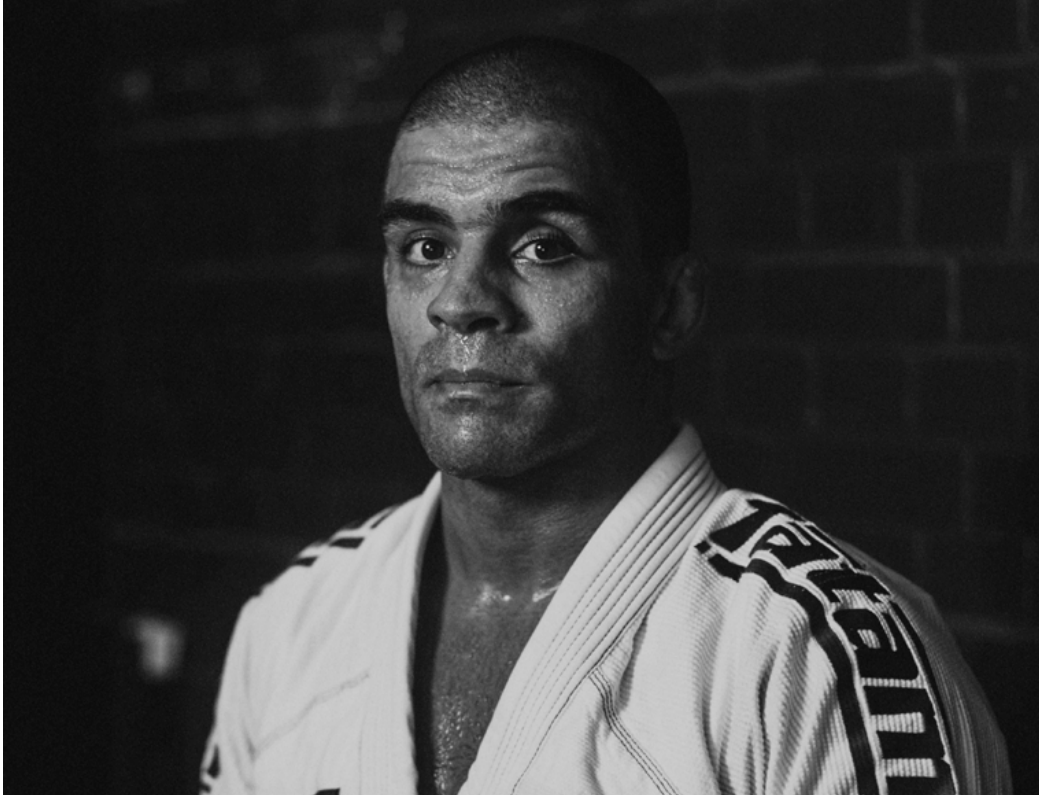
"We had some really intense team battles

between my gym and Alliance, Gracie Humaita, and Gracie Barra. You could pick spots around the mats and they were very intense, people cheering their teammates, the crowds going crazy over a specific person. That whole environment was so tense, especially when your teammates got smashed. You could barely talk to friends from other schools; it was a crazy environment pretty much like gangs back in those days. We each had our gang and we would protect our gang, if you started getting along too well with people from another school they'd start calling you a *creonte*, or a traitor or something, so you stayed with your own guys who always had your back.

"I can't explain how intense it was, especially during the fights. My matches against Feitosa, against Leozinho, against Terere, were fights where everyone was watching and screaming and going crazy. These were fights where even the next day, without newspaper coverage or internet, everyone in Rio knew and everyone would talk about them, and every single adult and teenager that trained jiu jitsu was talking about your fight at clubs, at the beach, in nightclubs, so all of a sudden you became popular inside Rio because of what you did the previous weekend at a tournament. That period was amazing, it was the glory years, a golden era. I met some really good people, had some battles. I learned a lot about jiu jitsu and about character, about friendship and about what's important in life. Those were important years.

"I don't miss them because I think it's all about evolving and growing, but those days helped make me a better instructor, fighter and a better person. Those times were incredibly intense, and I guess if anything, I do miss that intensity a little bit. I think everyone who lived that time at some point sees how things are a little different and a little softer today in some areas, like 'back in the day things were this way and that way,' and some things really were better before, but we move forward and can't live in the past. Today is a different time, but it is nice when we see the younger people coming in appreciate what we did back in the day, because what they have today I believe we planted the seeds for in the 1990s and early 2000s during that era of jiu jitsu. And they should appreciate it because to move our sport forward we have to understand its past and how the past affects the present," said Shaolin.

Jiu jitsu's landscape has changed vastly since the mid-1990s and early 2000s. Although the art has grown in leaps and bounds, and the sport has gained unprecedented popularity, Shaolin believes that not all the changes that have taken place since the Golden Era have been good. "I think with YouTube and the internet in general it changed things, because we went from



protecting what we were doing in the gym with secrecy to wanting to put everything out there on YouTube and stuff for everyone to see. Also, nowadays people want to follow others more and do what everyone else is doing. I think back then, because there was less to copy, people were more creative and would invent more things. Nowadays there is less creativity more 'do what the successful guy is doing'.

"We're born in jiu jitsu as an original empty canvas to make our own style and now people are more into copying each other's styles and everyone kind of looks the same at the tournaments, not a lot of people setting themselves apart in style. I think things have changed in that regard. I hope at some point this will change and we all get back to the creativity more; invest in yourself and stimulate the creativity to come up with new things instead of copying what other people do. Sometimes we like praise so much that we try to do what others are doing to get it. We're spending maybe too much time on YouTube watching what other people do instead of being on the mats figuring out what we can do.

"We'd spend a lot of time at the gym doing different classes, coming up with new things, today a lot of people are stuck with our old formulas and they're not doing those formulas really well. Not everyone, there are some innovators, but the majority is like this. The guys that are doing really well, there are a lot of Brazilian black belts right now doing well that are following the old formula of training and being on the mats, communicating between students and instructors, making sure creativity stays sharp, and from here is where they're getting the really big results. People looking for shortcuts, people looking for magic, might be on top for a while but they won't last because they just don't get it. They don't get what jiu jitsu is made for and I think it's a shame."

Shaolin no longer competes regularly at the highest levels, and has shifted his focus towards his students and spending time with his wife, children and dogs. The Nova Uniao stalwart has backed his words up with his actions throughout his 20 plus year journey through Brazilian jiu jitsu. During his campaign as a black belt, he competed against the toughest and most innovative generation of athletes to ever step on a BJJ mat and he cemented his legacy as one of the fiercest lightweights while fighting in the Golden Era.

To keep up with Shaolin make sure to follow him on Twitter @vitorshaolinbjj!

"INSTEAD OF GETTING FRUSTRATED BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT GETTING BETTER, ASK YOURSELF WHAT YOU CAN DO TO BE BETTER"

DOMINATE THE MAT

Hayabusa is dedicated to bringing the best products to athletes so they can train harder and perform better. With meticulously crafted designs using premium materials and state of the art manufacturing, you can expect perfection when you roll in Hayabusa.

HAYABUSA®

HAYABUSAFIGHT.CO.UK

BULL TERRIER

The Real Deal Aims

Tribal Gi

王者の装束

SEJA UM CAMPEAO

WORDS: OLIVER GEDDES

IF I WERE IN CHARGE OF THINGS...

The ruleset employed by the IBJJF gets a lot of criticism from the community, with constant calls for changes to the scoring system and better refereeing.

As a referee and as a competitor, I am generally very happy with the rules as they are. That doesn't mean that there aren't moments when I think about what I would like to change if I were in charge. In this article, I aim to set out a few things that I feel are logical improvements to the system in play that would make things simpler, more consistent and more entertaining for the referees, competitors and the spectators:

FIGHT LENGTHS FIXED AT A MAXIMUM OF 8 MINUTES FOR BLACK BELTS

The increase in fight length from five minutes at white belt, to ten minutes at black belt, is a massive difference and, in my opinion, an unnecessarily large one. There are very, very few competitors who can fight at their maximum pace for ten full minutes. So, as a result, what you get are periods of waiting and stalling before a final flurry of activity. Masters black belt matches, fixed at five or six minutes, are often more exciting and dynamic than the majority of ten minute matches.

From a spectator's point of view, it's often the purple and brown belt matches that have the highest work rate throughout and the most going on, and I would aim to replicate that with an eight-minute match limit. Seven or even six minute matches would also be an extremely valid option but I feel that I would err on the side of a little higher rather than a little lower.

RASH GUARDS COMPULSORY UNDER THE GI FOR ALL FIGHTERS, MALE AND FEMALE

This might be controversial, but I feel that in a modern sport, where close physical contact is frequently involved and where I would say the majority of practitioners train daily with a rash guard on under their gi, they should also be part of the competition uniform. The fact that they are legal for women (for obvious reasons) in both judo and jiu jitsu competition and this hasn't caused any problems that I'm aware of, shows that it can be done, and it would help to bring the rules for both genders in line with each other.

Obviously, rash guards would have to be form-fitting and snug as verified by the gi checkers to avoid fingers getting snagged and similar situations. I would like to just say that they would be allowed as an option, but some fighters having rash guards and some not would look unprofessional and awkward, so making it compulsory would bring things in line much more simply.

KNEEBARS LEGAL AT PURPLE BELT

The introduction of almost every leg lock at brown belt has completely transformed the game. Positions that would have been safe previously are not now, and a lot of competitors have had to adapt their game to be able to survive in the new environment. Additionally, the fact that most leglocks are only legal at brown belt and above means that many academies will not allow them even in training until purple belt, or sometimes later than that.

This is obviously an academy's choice, but introducing kneebars at purple belt would be a way to limit the extent of both problems. Not only would there be a more gradual introduction of new techniques, the kneebar itself is a submission that you will usually have a chance to defend, or tap to, before your leg becomes significantly hyper-extended. Without the addition of the toehold as a secondary threat, your technique has to be much sharper to isolate and control the leg to attain a clean finish.

GRIPPING INSIDE THE TOP OF THE PANTS MADE ILLEGAL

This is a rather niche complaint, but gripping inside the sleeves of the pants or jacket has always been illegal to protect fingers from being caught and twisted, which is a completely valid reason. However, it remains perfectly legal to reach your hands into the top of your opponent's gi pants and take a grip there, which is frequently used to assist with stacking, dragging and various other techniques.

It is heavily used because it is simply more powerful and harder to break than the alternative outside grip. To maintain consistency, I would have the top of the pants be treated the same as the bottom and force competitors to grip on the outside instead. As an added (and hopefully welcome) benefit, the prevalence of competitors having wardrobe malfunctions mid-match should also be reduced somewhat, something which would help to move towards an easier-to-officiate and more spectator-friendly competition environment.

CROSSED FOOTLOCK FROM BACK LEGAL AT BROWN BELT ONLY

The crossed footlock from the back is defined in the rules as a straight footlock; legal at white belt, despite the fact that it usually either attacks the knee (accidentally) or the crossed ankles in a calf

Oli Geddes is a seasoned competitor, referee, globetrotter, half guard connoisseur and black belt under Roger Gracie

> **"THE FACT THAT MOST LEGLOCKS ARE ONLY LEGAL AT BROWN BELT AND ABOVE MEANS THAT MANY ACADEMIES WILL NOT ALLOW THEM EVEN IN TRAINING UNTIL PURPLE BELT"**

crush-esque position that is normally only legal at brown belt. It also has a relatively high injury rate when put on with a great deal of force, which, given the fact one fighter is having their back taken, is nearly all the time.

To me, this is an example of something that is legal at white belt because of what it represents as a classic mistake made by an attacker holding the back position. However, from the pressure and mechanics of the submission itself, I would define it as a brown belt technique. This would have a lot of knock-on effects, but it is at least in keeping with the definitions in the rules.

SCORING POINTS FOR BACK CONTROL VARIATIONS

The classic definition of back control, requiring both hooks placed inside the opponent's thighs, is something that we have really moved past in recent years. There are a number of different variations that allow someone to maintain control over their opponent from the back, but for various reasons are not scoring positions.

From a refereeing perspective, it's important to make the positions easy to define, so the two that I would introduce are for the body triangle from the back to be considered back control (as it is under ADCC rules) as well as having both hooks in but with the feet crossed. This isn't to say that crossed feet to one side of the body would count, but if you are able to put both your feet inside your opponent's hips and happen to cross your feet, have you not displayed sufficient control to be awarded points? I would argue you have. You would have to take into account that your opponent attacking your crossed feet with a counter footlock would prevent you from scoring the points for back control until the submission threat had passed, but, that aside, both of these back control variations are easy for a referee to define, score and adequately reward advancement to a powerful finishing position, in a way that the current ruleset does not.

CLEARER REFEREE INSTRUCTIONS

This is a more general topic but one that definitely deserves some discussion. There are several different positional phases in which a match can take place: the standing phase, where both competitors are on their feet; the guard phase, where one person has established a guard and the other is looking to pass it; the neutral phase, where neither of these are true, either because the guard has been passed, someone has turned to turtle, or any of a number of other reasons.

A verbal command by the referee that each of these phases has been entered would make things much clearer for the competitors in terms of those risky movements that come from transitional positions. For example, if a competitor were to come up from the ground with a single leg attempt, they would still be in the guard phase until the grips altered. If the defending athlete were to then kick his leg free, he would have to wait for a declaration by the referee that he was in the standing phase before he could pull guard. You will often see moments where an athlete defends a technique and then immediately jumps to the guard, trusting that he has defended enough and separated enough before doing so that his opponent will not score any points, even though he ends up in exactly the same position his opponent was pursuing.

Having a verbal command for these things would obviously complicate things for the referee and put more pressure on them but it would prevent them having to make these kind of decisions so often, and limit the amount of nonplussed and angry looks on competitors' faces after one of these situations.

There are obviously many more smaller and larger things to consider, but I only have so much space here to go over the topic. As it is, the sport has evolved massively over the last decade or so and the ruleset has had to evolve with it whilst maintaining familiarity and connections to its roots. I think some of the larger changes above would have a positive effect on the sport, despite the fact that they are harder to introduce because they stray from the way things have always been done.

That said, I'm sure the ruleset will continue to adapt as the sport evolves, and we will continue to see small tweaks that will lead to a better experience for competitors, referees and spectators alike.

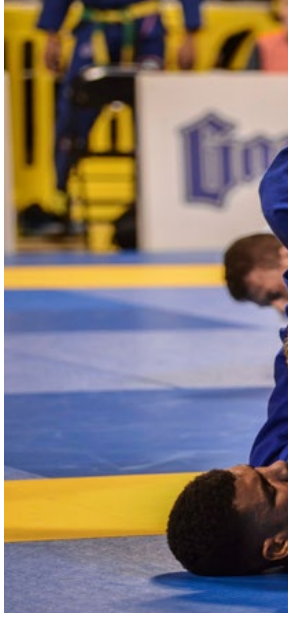
PERSONALISED

PREMIUM BRAZILIAN JIU JITSU BELTS

thegrapplersgift.bigcartel.com

THE GRAPPLERS GIFT

Progress JIU JITSU



WORDS: SAM JOSEPH
PICTURES: ALBERTO MARCHETTI

HOW BJJ HELPS US WIN IN DIVERSE ENVIRONMENTS

Diversity is something we look for and work towards in many places in society. It can be pursued in the workplace, social-groups, political organisations and so on.

Diversity gives any group more access to resources, intellectual capital and the benefit of sharing different points of view. These things increase the likelihood that the group will be successful and productive. A great benefit we get as Brazilian jiu jitsu practitioners is in how it prepares us to both promote diversity and thrive in diverse environments. Let's take a look at a couple of ways it accomplishes that!

BJJ SHOWS US HOW TO THRIVE IN A MERITOCRACY

Brazilian jiu jitsu culture is merit-based: it is a "reap what you sow" environment. The two aspects of BJJ that best exemplify this are the ranking system and focus on competition. BJJ athletes only receive four merit-based promotions (blue, purple, brown and black) in their probable eight-year plus journey to black belt. These promotions are earned from coaches who watch them drill, spar and sometimes compete over a period of time. Even academies that perform belt "tests" are often testing for specific core competencies that only qualify the athlete to be "considered" for the belt promotion rather than automatically earning them the belt. The point being that advancement is earned with adequate performance over time rather than some "one-time feat". To move up a rank in BJJ, we must "be that rank" day after day on the mat in drilling, sparring and/or in competition.

Competition and BJJ go hand-in-hand regardless of whether you focus on the sport or self-defense/mixed-martial arts. The sport is as popular as it is in large part because of how it embraces all belt levels, ages and sizes of people. The IBJJF has world championships from white to black belt, juvenile to masters (5 year brackets after 30) and in multiple weight-classes. That INCLUSION allows BJJ athletes, in any walk of life, to compete at an international level and made the BJJ lifestyle open to EVERYONE willing to embrace it!

The ranking process and focus on competition create an atmosphere that teaches us to look inwards and ask ourselves what we are willing to do in order to achieve our BJJ goals on a regular basis. We can take inspiration from coaches, teammates and other athletes but, ultimately, we decide how far we go. The promotions and tournament medals are great, but every day we choose to participate in this environment molds us into people who can successfully participate in a meritocracy. When we are that focused on what we, and others around us, can do and earn, we look past the irrelevant differences that do not impact performance...we embrace diversity.

BJJ TEACHES US TO VALUE DIFFERENT APPROACHES AND PERSPECTIVES

The Miyao brothers are guard-pullers who have "berimbolo'd" their way to success. Rodolfo Vieira won multiple titles using one of the best guard-passing games of all-time. Roger Gracie became the most decorated sport BJJ athlete of all-time by combining mastery of basic techniques and a warrior's spirit. Mackenzie Dern has won world titles and the hearts of BJJ fans world-wide with her all-attack style and willingness to compete against any and all-comers. Finally, Buchecha has recently dominated the world of BJJ by being a big guy with the agility and game of a little guy. These examples show us the truth that there are many paths to success in Brazilian jiu jitsu.

When people begin training at my academy, Buckhead Jiu-Jitsu in Atlanta, I tell them that Brazilian jiu jitsu is akin to building a house. Every house needs a solid foundation and that foundation in BJJ is made up of the fundamental

Sam Joseph is a 2nd degree Black Belt in BJJ under the Yamasaki Academy. He was awarded his black belt in 2007 and has vast experience as a teacher, BJJ competitor and MMA fighter.

"THOSE WHO COMPETE TEND TO TRAIN BOTH REGULARLY AND WITH A HEIGHTENED LEVEL OF PURPOSE"

techniques. Without that as a base, the "house" will not stand long. Once the solid foundation is set, we can build the house that best represents our personalities, physical characteristics and skills. That is where the "art" of BJJ comes in.

We see this played out in our academies, in competition and, as referenced earlier, in the varying styles of the stars of the sport. As we immerse ourselves and find our feet in Brazilian jiu jitsu, we intuitively learn to value different styles and approaches to success. That practice puts us in a great position to participate and excel in diverse settings.

BJJ TEACHES US TO FIND BEAUTY IN MANY FORMS

At first glance, this point seems to be the same as the previous one but there is a subtle difference between valuing/respecting something and finding beauty in it. BJJ inspires a high level of passion and that passion is pursued and interpreted in different ways based on our varying experiences, attributes and goals. The incredible opportunity this offers is in providing us with exposure to many diverse philosophies on, and expressions of, the art and BJJ lifestyle.

I spent four years living in Los Angeles and training with Renzo Gracie black belt and 5 Star Martial Arts head coach, Shawn Williams. Coming up through the ranks at the Yamasaki Academy, I always had a healthy respect for Shawn and his Renzo Gracie teammates. Respect turned into real admiration for his approach to BJJ as I got to spend time training with and learning from him. I had always been focused on BJJ for competition: learning competition-ready techniques and/or improving my competition game.

Shawn, while an accomplished competitor in his own right, also found tremendous joy in exploring, breaking down and adding variations to techniques. He enjoyed BJJ for the art itself and not the medals it could win him. After a while, not only did I find value in that point of view but I actually relished looking at BJJ through that lens. Shawn's different perspective helped me find MORE reasons to love and appreciate Brazilian jiu jitsu.

Participating in the BJJ lifestyle, we learn to do more than simply tolerate or even see merit in different views and beliefs. Over time, we grasp the concept that different can be beautiful and embracing what is different can have real, positive impact on our lives.

BJJ ENCOURAGES US TO FIND COMMON GROUND IN TIGHT SPACES

Brazilian jiu jitsu consistently puts us in tight spaces with others. As it is a combat sport, most classes end with some form of drilling or sparring. Training like this puts us in close proximity to people of different backgrounds, ethnicities and social standing. Being a BJJ athlete means dismissing those "differences" and focusing only on what our partners bring to the mat. Every once in a while, I like to illustrate this by walking up to a group of teammates who are drilling between classes to ask them what they do for a living. The surprise that regular training partners show at each other's answers is always entertaining. That singular focus on the positives and common ground, day after day, trains us to be productive in diverse environments.

CONCLUSION:

The world we live in is getting more diverse by the day. That reality is permeating our lives at all levels and requires us to develop new skill sets in dealing with people who are different. Brazilian jiu jitsu gives us a leg up, as participating in the lifestyle helps us develop the tools we need to win in this new world order.

See you on the mat!!

WORDS: CALLUM MEDCRAFT
PICTURES: ANDRE CAMARA

BRITISH ARMY BJJ TEAM TACKLING PTSD

Sadly, the subject of mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is still surrounded by much stigma, especially within the Armed Forces.

The British Army BJJ team decided to take action, and recently attempted to complete 1000 rounds of sparring within a 24-hour period to raise awareness for PTSD and the charity, *Combat Stress*. We caught up with Major Shamus Kelly, a BJJ purple belt and one of the organisers of the challenge.

Hi Shamus, thanks for your time. Can you start by telling us about your role in the British Army and how you personally got involved in BJJ?
I'm a Major within the Army, and I first started training around 2009. I got injured during a training routine and decided I wanted to get back into martial arts. I used to compete at national level in kickboxing, and I'd boxed regimentally within the army as well. Because I'd competed at a decent standard in kickboxing and boxing, I didn't feel like going back to that as a sport to help me through a recovery process. I used to be good and didn't want to go back to being distinctly average. So, I realised that I was lacking in any ability on the ground and was aware of BJJ via the Ultimate Fighting Championship. From there I just decided to give it a go.

"THERE'S A BIG STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH MENTAL HEALTH, SO OUR GOAL WAS TO TRY AND RAISE SOME MONEY FOR A CHARITY DOING GREAT THINGS"

Sports like boxing have been well adopted within the army for years, so how have the soldiers taken to the idea of training BJJ in their recreation time?
Well it's only been established for a couple of years, but the growth really has been quite prolific. We started off with a handful of members and now we have over 250 people on the books, with two annual Army championships as well. For our last championships, we came close to 100 competitors, which is way more than any other martial art discipline within the army. So, within our two-year existence we've gone from three or four members to becoming significantly the largest martial art association in the army.

That's amazing! As someone who is personally very well versed in a variety of martial arts, what would you say of BJJ as an applicable martial art that will actually help soldiers do their job?
Well, it's a long-standing belief of mine that BJJ is probably the ideal martial art for people serving in the armed forces, and that's for a number or reasons. From a self-defence perspective, it teaches people of all ages, genders and physical abilities how to protect themselves against larger, stronger opponents. I believe BJJ also offers soldiers the abilities to diffuse potential situations while on operations in ways that, say, boxing or Muay Thai can't. It's not that boxing or Muay Thai aren't affective, because they absolutely are, but if you're well versed in a striking art and you use it in a self-defence scenario, you're likely to put someone in hospital.

We all know that BJJ allows us to subdue people in different ways. This becomes very important when you have soldiers on the ground and they can incapacitate instead of hurt people, especially when there are cameras everywhere when you're tactically deployed on the ground. If there's a three second clip of a soldier striking someone while on operation, there's the potential for that to go viral, so I believe BJJ has a real strength in terms of helping with political implications when on operations as well.

What about the actual structure of British Army BJJ?
So, basically, there are clubs that are set up across most of the garrisons, and obviously, some have been around for a while and others are brand new. We have the Penthouse Combat Club, which is part of 16 Air Assault Brigade in Colchester, and they run classes every morning and pretty much every evening. So the guys up there have fantastic access to training, while we also have clubs that are still trying to cobble some mats together and really finding their feet.

What we do try and do is that every Wednesday at 1:30 we get everyone in the Aldershot region into the Aldershot Combat Centre for a central class, which is delivered by Andy Roberts, who is the Army's head coach. We use these Wednesday sessions to run seminars as well, so we've had the likes of Mauricio Gomes and Roger Gracie down. These are great because it gives our BJJ enthusiasts a chance to learn from the best, while they also act as great recruiting tools for new members.

Can you tell us about your latest incentive to help raise money and awareness for PTSD?
Well, as a solider, PTSD has either affected you personally while on operations, or indirectly via the guys you work with. When you see the damage it does and also the stigma that can be associated with seeking treatment, you realise it's a big issue.

If someone has a bad tour, they can come back as a completely different person – almost as if they've left part of themselves on tour. When these people return home, it can of course also can have a detrimental effect on their family as well. With PTSD, you start to erode your support base, as people around you can often see there's something wrong, but you potentially don't. Obviously, this can be a very destructive process.

So what charities like *Combat Stress* do is they take these people in and give them coping mechanisms and a level of therapy that help them come to terms with what's happening, and then move on. The problem with lots of charities is that they don't always get the funding they need. Things like the 22 Push-Up Challenge were fantastic for raising awareness, but like everything else they need constant nurturing to keep the message alive.

And we're not just talking about soldiers here; it's policemen, it's firemen, it's anyone that's involved in a really traumatic incident that they just can't come to terms with. Like I say, there's a big stigma associated with mental health, so our goal was to try and raise some money for a charity doing great things and keep beating the drum surrounding mental health issues. It can affect anyone, no one is immune to it, so it's an extremely important issue.

So, in typical Armed Forces style, you and the team decided you were going to do 1000 five-minute rounds within a 24-hour window – pretty full on!
Well, there are a few of us running the behind the scenes stuff for the team, so I sat down with a guy called Captain Rob Maynard. We thought about what we could do, and we both agreed it needs to be a little bit different, a little bit out there. So yeah, we decided we wanted to do 1000 rounds of sparring in 24-hours. As you'd expect, we got amazing support from the guys in the Army team and we knew we'd break the 1000 round barrier – I believe we did over 1500 in the end.

Individually, we all wanted to do 100 rounds within the 24-hours. As you know, the time it takes to recover in between sessions and so on made this a pretty tough challenge. When I told Roger (Gracie) and Mauricio (Gomes) about the target they both started laughing.

Well, we saw you midway through the task at Roger Gracie's London academy, and no one was taking it easy on you, that's for sure!
(Laughs). It was amazing to have Roger and Mauricio get involved and have me over to do part of the challenge at their academy. By the time I arrived there, I'd already had a morning session. I arrived slightly late and Mauricio

grabbed me to say, 'hurry up and get on the mat, we've *Jiu Jitsu Style* here to cover this and Guy Ritchie is ready to roll with you'. So it was a bit surreal to have a Hollywood director involved, and in typical Roger style he gave a little speech making sure no one was going to give me an easy time! I ended up training with around nine black belts, a coral belt and a few amazing brown belts. I don't think I've ever been that tired in my life.

It was a great effort from all the Army guys, and we had big groups in Aldershot, Colchester and also in Cyprus, all taking part to reach the goal.

Great stuff, and we hear you picked up a unique injury as a side effect of 24 hours on the mat?
It was absolutely brutal (laughs). We stopped to get a couple of hours sleep around midnight and when I took off my gi my whole body was red raw as if I was sunburnt. I'd pretty much taken off a layer of skin - it was pretty painful!

Thanks again for your time Shamus, is there anywhere people can go to learn more about PTSD and find out how they can show their support?
The best place to go is **www.combatstress.org.uk** and there's plenty of information on PTSD. More importantly, if you're struggling yourself, and you don't have to be a soldier, give these guys a call and they'll be able to help you.

SHAMUS KELLY

Shamus Kelly is a Major in the British Army and BJJ purple belt.

"We all know that BJJ allows us to subdue people in different ways. This becomes very important when you have soldiers on the ground and they can incapacitate instead of hurt people, especially when there are cameras everywhere when you're tactically deployed on the ground."

WORDS: NIC GREGORIADES
PICTURES: BLANCA MARIA GARCIA

THE BERIMBOLO CAN'T SAVE YOU

I was recently in Tokyo filming the *Soul of Jiu Jitsu*, a short documentary about what I believe to be the essence of BJJ.

The script called for some shots within a traditional Japanese temple. As luck would have it, one of my hosts in Japan has a jiu jitsu student who is a bona fide Zen monk, and he offered to let me use his temple. In exchange, I offered him a complimentary private lesson.

A recently graduated blue belt, he trains 10 times per week - eight classes and two private lessons. He had some technical questions, which I did my best to answer for him. After that I suggested that we roll so that I could see and feel where he needed improvement.

He came at me full speed and had some really flashy and interesting moves, including a wicked inverted guard and some slick reverse de la Riva stuff. Although I hadn't seen the stuff he was attacking with, I waited for openings or mistakes and then used my size advantage to pressure him into a few easy submissions.

Later that week I sparred with a black belt at the same academy. He was exactly the same size and had a comparable physique. He also had a similar game and attacked me with an almost identical set of techniques. As with the monk, I expected another easy roll, but this time the match was surprisingly difficult and ended in a draw.

The difference between the two fighters was like night and day. When I applied pressure to the first one he crumbled, and yet the other was like a fortress. Although they were using the same attacks, I never felt in danger from one but was always wary of the other.

What were the real reasons for the discrepancy in ability between the two fighters, besides the obvious one of their level of experience?

THE FUNDAMENTALS
For most jiu jitsu guys, you need to 'earn the right' to use the flashier techniques. How can you expect to submit someone when you don't even know the basics of how to pass to side mount, or how to keep them there when you do?

A great example is red-and-white belt, Mauricio Gomes. I don't think he even knows what a worm guard or a tornado guard even is. But, I've seen him spar with 25 year-old, athletic blue belts who try to use these techniques on him and he simply passes, and chokes with the same sequence almost every single time. He can do this because he has solid fundamentals!

"HOW MANY OF US JUST GO TO BJJ CLASS WITHOUT MAKING ANY OTHER EFFORTS OR LIFESTYLE CHANGES OUTSIDE THE ACADEMY?"

DEFENCE
The blue belt could attack, but when on the defensive it was not difficult to control and then submit him. With the black belt, any control I managed to get was really difficult to hold on to. He knew the basic escapes and defences much better.

This is closely related to fundamentals, since defensive techniques and concepts are nearly always fundamental in nature.

You might have heard 'attack is the best form of defence'. It doesn't work that way in jiu jitsu. Attacking often gives your opponent space, which can quickly take you from the offensive role to the defensive one. But, good defence tires out and frustrates your opponent and gives you attacking opportunities of your own.

BREATHING
After a five-minute match, the blue belt's chest was heaving and he was panting almost uncontrollably.

But the black belt, although perspiring a little, looked relaxed and composed. Controlling your breathing is absolutely essential for good jiu jitsu performance. It always astounds me how few jiu jitsu guys understand this. Or perhaps most of them understand it but just ignore it.

While jiu jitsu breathing patterns is quite a broad topic, here are the basics: Try to keep your breathing as even and rhythmic as possible and try to breathe through your nose. Use your opponent's breath to pace yours - make sure yours is always slower. Never hold your breath.

ATTRIBUTES

Even though I outweighed him by over 30lbs, the black belt's strength-to-weight ratio was so good that there was no way I could out-muscle him. As I mentioned in a previous column, strength plays a huge role in jiu jitsu - the more you have, the better. If you find yourself getting thrown around, hit the weight room or go rock-climbing. Or do both.

While both had similar flexibility, the black belt's other attributes were also much better. His balance was exceptional and he had more endurance. Interestingly, I found that it was the monk's flexibility that was actually keeping him in the game during our match. If his other attributes had been at a higher level he would have been much closer to the black belt in terms of performance.

TIMING

The blue belt's attacks never really felt threatening, but whatever the black belt threw at me forced me to defend and broke my rhythm. The difference was down to timing.

How do you improve timing? Repetition and practice. It would benefit the blue belt to take just one of those flashy sweeps and practise the hell out of it, instead of learning ten of them half-heartedly. After our match, I paid close attention to how the black belt trained - it was no surprise to me to see that he did a lot of drilling and very specific sparring.

CONCLUSION

I strongly suggest that you do not build your jiu jitsu foundation on techniques exclusively, especially not overly complex and esoteric ones. I'm always reminded of the biblical parable about 'building your house on a rock' instead of sand.

When you build your jiu jitsu around a set of flashy techniques, you literally are building your house on shifting sands. Why? Because those aspects of jiu jitsu are always changing and evolving. Moves are replaced by newer, more effective ones or sometimes go out of style. Or, perhaps a minor ruleset change might make them prohibited. But the core principles and movements never go out of fashion and when you focus on them you are building your jiu jitsu house upon a rock-solid foundation.

The Berimbolo can't save you, nor can the tornado guard, the worm guard, the inverted-reverse - dimension x-nipple-crippler, or whatever the latest move of the month is. No technique can.

NIC GREGORIADES

Nic is Roger Gracie's first black belt student and the founder of the Jiu Jitsu Brotherhood

WORDS: MATT JARDINE

BEHIND THE MASK: BJJ & SOCIAL MEDIA

Many years ago, in my life before jiu jitsu, I learnt something from Diana, Princess of Wales, that is as relevant to BJJ now as it was to the circumstance then.

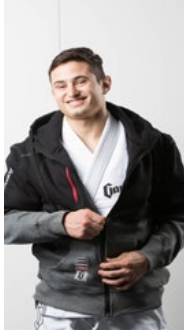
The Princess and I were on our way to the tennis courts where I regularly taught her and the young Princes, William and Harry. We shared the usual pre-lesson chit chat: "How was your morning?" "How are the boys?" "What's new?" The Princess told me about her Angola trip from which she had just returned. Diana was making international headlines by visiting victims of landmines and courageously walking through minefields to raise awareness about injuries caused by this vicious method of weaponry and war. She was fiercely compassionate and, as I understood it, was genuine in her support of those in need, particularly children.

She told me about an over-zealous reporter. The reporter, in his bid to get the big scoop, invasively shoved a microphone over and across the face of a little Angolan child that Diana was holding in her lap. Herself a mother, the Princess was clearly riled and astounded that some people lost their humanity when searching for a story. Naturally, she pushed the invading microphone away from the child's personal space, as any parent would.

It was a matter-of-fact story, a piece of real life trivia that we shared, as millions of people do every day. "My boss is an idiot", "Oh man, I'm sorry to hear that"; "I've got a cracking headache", "I've got some Paracetamol in my bag if you need one?", "I'll be at training a little late, I've got to wait until Shelly is home- the baby sitter's sick." Run of the mill anecdotes.

But the lesson of this story, and one that has stayed prominently in my mind ever since, would be learnt later, at ten o'clock.

After a long day's coaching, I arrived home, slumped on the sofa and watched the ten o'clock news. The headlining item was about Lady Diana's Angola visit and her run-in with a reporter. The piece slanted toward suggesting that it was 'an explosive encounter' that 'breached professionalism' on both sides. A debate would have to ensue about the 'whole affair'. Was this the same story about which the Princess, herself had told me? How had it become so grand? It was almost unrecognisable.



At that moment, it hit me: the power and the potential danger of media. A simple real-life story, when filtered for the 'best bits' and stripped of its mundane foundations, can very quickly become an entirely new, dare I say fabricated, event. I call it the 'Diana Principle'.

I was having breakfast with Charles Negromonte, Eduardo Rios, Jackson Sousa and Gilbert Burns on the morning of Polaris 4 when Diana's memory came flooding back. Previously, I had only known these men from the perspective of a BJJ student or slightly awe inspired MMA fan, but now I was able to meet them on a human level. Just as I had with Diana, I chatted with these royalty of the martial arts, and learnt a little of their real lives. The reality is often so much more interesting than the sound bites, each innocuous and mundane experience necessary in punctuating life's rich tapestry.

This article is not a kiss-and-tell exposé; private conversations will remain private and what I share is already permitted public knowledge, somewhere at least. But I make these points to highlight that we all hold a razor-sharp double-edged sword in our hands: social media.

Social media is the modern media. It allows access to information that was impossible in bygone days. In an instant we can learn from teachers across the globe, connect with people we would never bump into ordinarily, and comment on issues from which our ignorance would previously have barred us. The BJJ community, more than many, has embraced social media with open arms and it is, arguably, integral to the whole BJJ experience. But, we must remain aware of its inherent flaws: idolatry, instant gratification, misinformation and narcissism.

DISCOVERING GOD WEARS SLIPPERS

As I'd learnt all those years ago, when you take an ordinary anecdote and frame it within the confines of a TV, computer or smartphone screen, it morphs into fantasy with those at centre stage often idolised. I spoke to Callum Medcraft about this. Callum, the editor of *Jiu Jitsu Style,* has met, interviewed and photographed more BJJ superstars than many others and knows better than most the truth behind the myths.

"At first I was very much in awe of these legends," Medcraft admits, "and it took quite a long time for me to finally relax around them. But I found that these guys [and girls] were- as clichéd as it sounds- just normal human beings.

"We are actually really lucky in jiu jitsu in that they [the high-level athletes] are just really happy, grateful and glad that we are telling their story."

While admiration and respect for our role models is both natural and important, idolatry is less useful. When we idolise we tend to view experience through rose tinted glasses and miss the detail, intricacies and lessons of a wider picture and perspective. According to UK psychologists at the University of Leicester, an estimated 36 percent of people suffer from celebrity worship, and they predict that rates of unhealthy idolatry will continue to rise.

On the surface, the social media style snapshot of the world may be inspiring, but it fails to plumb the depths of experience. Jackson Sousa is one such example. Before sharing breakfast with him and his peers, I had only known Sousa from either watching him from the

"JUST AS I HAD WITH PRINCESS DIANA, I CHATTED WITH THESE ROYALTY OF THE MARTIAL ARTS, AND LEARNT A LITTLE OF THEIR REAL LIVES"

stands of a big tournament or via photos and videos online. His massive frame and arms spread widely in victory, my only image of him: a BJJ behemoth.

But, I leant that this huge man is also a deeply committed, self-taught student of language who is always, it seems, ready with a warm and open smile. If we focused solely on his achievements as an athlete, we would miss the most valuable lessons of humility and compassion coupled with the absolute determination that he demonstrates throughout his day-to-day life. While his guard passing skills are useful for those who share his body type, his character is a lesson for us all. Knowing that 'God also wear slippers' helps us to understand their experiences rather than merely worship them. The more we relate, the more we assimilate.

I WANT IT ALL: NOW

We live in a time of instant gratification compounded by the internet's ability to share information almost immediately. This expectation of immediate delivery, whether it is information, products or a service is radically changing our internal landscape.

Impatient behaviour should already set alarm bells ringing for us as BJJ enthusiasts because we know that to succeed in the grappling arts, you must be prepared to play the long game. The very long game. On average (despite what the FB memes say), it takes between seven and ten years to attain a Brazilian jiu jitsu black belt. That is a long time of hard, relentless and often bruising training.

If the students of tomorrow are coming through our academy doors with a modern mindset of "I want it now", then the lifeblood of our art will dry up as the truth hits them squarely between the eyes, and they leave disillusioned. Hard work is always hard, but worse when we aren't prepared for it. As stewards of BJJ, we must be mindful of letting down gently those in hope of a quick fix.

EATS, SHOOTS AND LEAVES

Where you the put comma in this grammar book title will determine whether you are reading about a panda's daily diet or the tale of a Mafioso restaurant contract killing.

For better or worse, social media allows every Tom, Dick and Harriet to be a writer, expert and prolific voice. Freedom of speech is a positive thing as long as you punctuate, use grammar and consider what it is you are trying to say! Damn it! Literacy lecture aside, those publishing their ideas must be responsible with what they type out into the ether because there will almost certainly be repercussions.

We have already discussed the power of images within the confines of a 15.6" screen and their ability to hypnotise an audience, and it is even more applicable to the use of words. Power imbues words, it seems. They are the primary tool in a politician's arsenal, as an example, and Party stooges spend hours writing the perfect speech or press release. The authors understand their profound effect on voters. Diane Setterfield, author of 'The Thirteenth Tale,' says this of words:

"There is something about words. In expert hands, manipulated deftly, they take you prisoner."
Unless it is utter rubbish, readers tend to trust what they read.

Misinformation, intentional or otherwise, is commonplace. Poorly phrased sentences can lead to misunderstanding, animosity and resentment. They can lure an unsuspecting student to a school that, although not lying, is not telling the whole truth when they don't fully explain the initials on their black belt credentials. We have all seen these types of ads on our social media feeds.

Rushed responses on threads can lead to arguments that may spill over at the next tournament (we've all seen this too). Humour can be mistaken for disrespect when you can't see the smile on the face of the one behind the keyboard.

Matt Jardine is a Martial Arts teacher, writer and author. He is currently waiting for a knock on the door from Zuckerberg's 'hit squad' for suggesting that social media is less than perfect…

I AM KING

It seems fitting to finish as we started, with royalty, even if only of the self-appointed type.

My last point about social media and its possible detrimental effect on our art is that it seems to be allowing some to self-aggrandize and build on an ego that may already be out of control. Whether this is the fun and games of inexperience, or a more sinister and manipulative game plan, it is wholly undesirable.

The top tier in our sport should be role models and beacons of the very best that BJJ has to offer, such as Teta, Burns, Sousa and Negromonte, to name just a few. The stars of tomorrow have a duty to evolve the art, for sure, but also to preserve the best qualities that transcend mere sporting tricks, athleticism and smart tactics.

Those transcendent qualities that our jiu jitsu ancestors strived so tirelessly to take forward are life skills as relevant to a modern day grappling superstar as they are to a woman in her mid-forties training a few times a month.

I'm no technophobe, and I don't dislike social media- I use it all the time both in my work and socially, but I am indebted to the qualities that over twenty-five years of martial arts have been good enough to afford me. I would be sad to watch modern ways erode the foundations of our art.

And so I offer a possible solution.

Next time you log into your social media account, take a moment before you press 'post' to ask yourself:

1. **Is this post accurate?**
2. **Is it useful?**
3. **Is it kind?**

If after failing the first three considerations you still feel the urge to share, then ask question 4: is it, at the very least, punctuated correctly? (Please Lord!)

Of course, over and above the decisions concerning social media, there is one other thought you may wish to ponder: could I be doing something a little more useful than posting my BJJ views- such as going to the academy and training?

Now there's a novel thought. ■

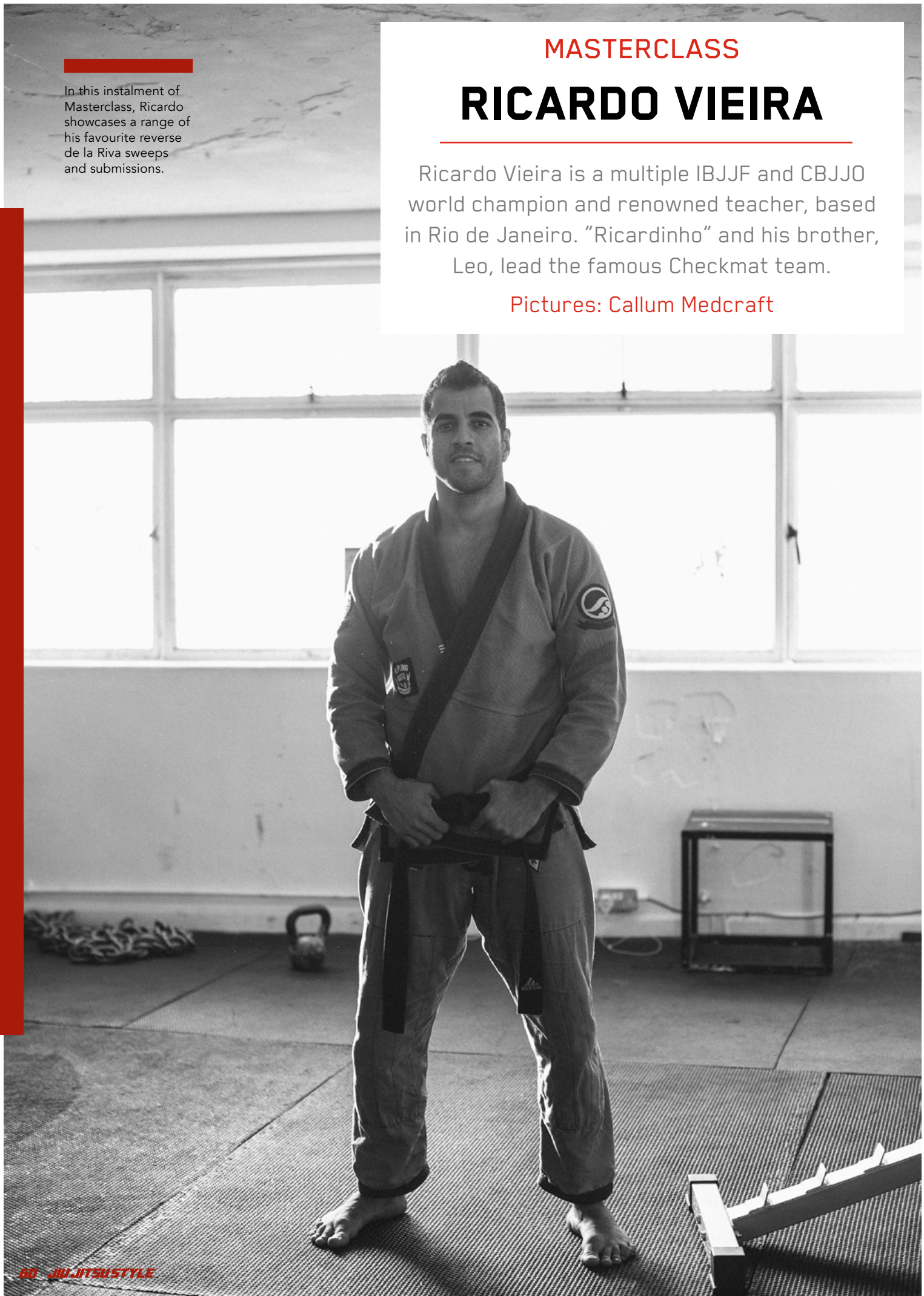
MASTERCLASS

RICARDO VIEIRA

In this instalment of Masterclass, Ricardo showcases a range of his favourite reverse de la Riva sweeps and submissions.

Ricardo Vieira is a multiple IBJJF and CBJJO world champion and renowned teacher, based in Rio de Janeiro. "Ricardinho" and his brother, Leo, lead the famous Checkmat team.

Pictures: Callum Medcraft



1: Starting from reverse de la Riva, you have control of your opponent's left lapel with your left hand and their left wrist with your right hand. It is important to keep your opponent's left hand underneath your leg as pictured to stop them getting a good grip to pass.

2/3: Your opponent looks to circle their right arm underneath your left leg and gain control of your right trouser leg to initiate a pass.

4: As soon as your opponent's right arm approaches your trouser, control their wrist with your left hand.

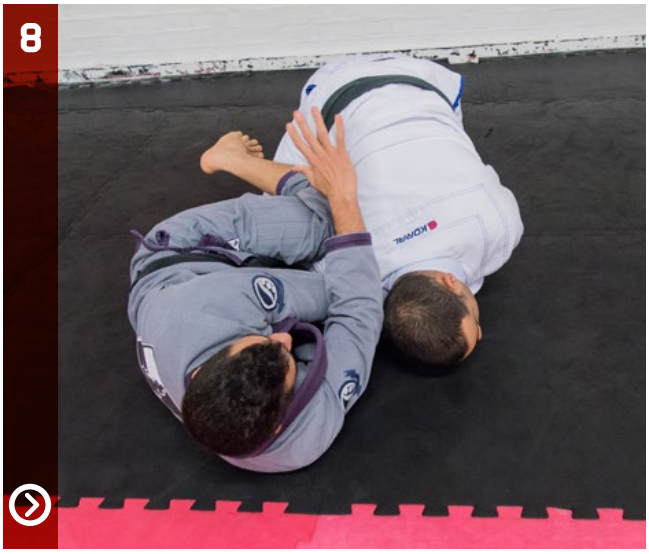
5/6: Once you have control of your opponent's right wrist, start to move your left knee down towards the mat, knocking them off base.

7/8: Finally, post your left hand on the mat and arrive on top.

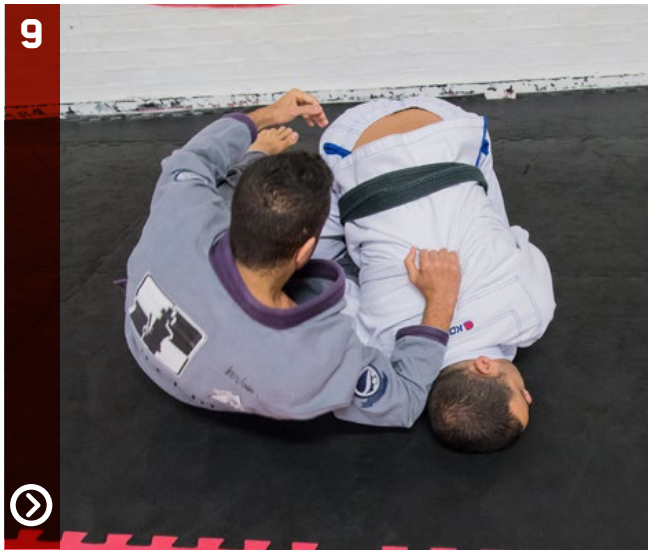
1: Starting from reverse de la Riva, you have control of your opponent's left lapel with your left hand and their left wrist with your right hand. It is important to keep your opponent's left hand underneath your leg as pictured to stop them getting a good grip to pass.

2/3: Your opponent looks to bring their right arm underneath your left leg to initiate a pass.

4/5/6/7: Extend your left leg and shift onto your right hip, finally bringing your leg down heavily on top of your opponent's shoulder as pictured.



8/9: As your opponent's posture is broken, bring your right hand to the back of their gi and post your elbow on the floor.



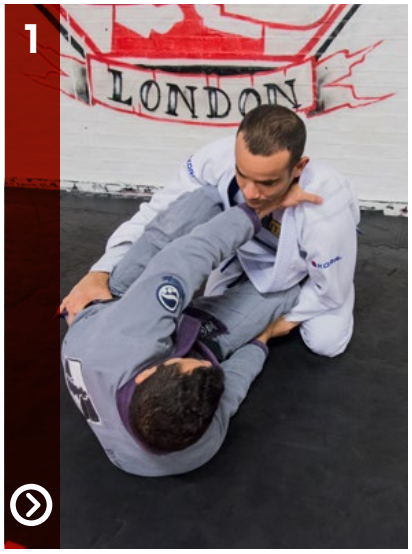
10/11/12: From here, you can sit up and manoeuver into side control.

1: Starting from reverse de la Riva, you have control of your opponent's left lapel with your left hand and their left wrist with your right hand. It is important to keep your opponent's left hand underneath your leg as pictured to stop them getting a good grip to pass.

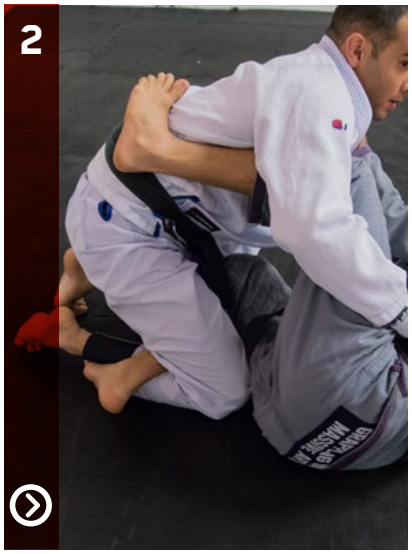
2/3: Your opponent brings their right knee up to sit in combat base. DETAILS: As your opponent comes up to combat base, you must change the position of your right hook as pictured to help with the overhead sweep.

4/5: Push your opponent's left hand between their legs; at the same time rotate on your right hip and start spinning underneath them.

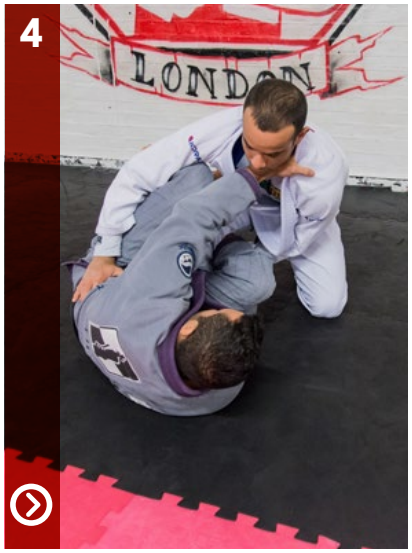
6/7/8: As soon as you arrive at a 45 degree angle to your partner you can continue to roll over your shoulders and arrive on top.



1: Your opponent is sitting up and looking to establish their guard from this position.



2/3: Your opponent brings their right knee up to sit in combat base. DETAILS: As your opponent comes up to combat base, you must change the position of your right hook as pictured to help with the overhead sweep.

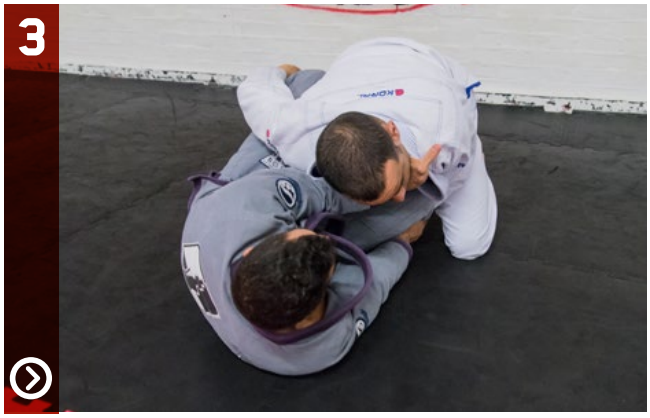


4/5/6: Push your opponent's left hand between their legs, at the same time rotate on your right hip and start spinning underneath them.

7/8/9: In a quick motion, pendulum your left leg and arrive at the side of your opponent. Control their hips and secure the turtle position.

1: Starting from reverse de la Riva, you have control of your opponent's left lapel with your left hand and their left wrist with your right hand. It is important to keep your opponent's left hand underneath your leg as pictured to stop them getting a good grip to pass.

2/3: Your opponent reaches back and controls your left trouser leg with their right hand, before bringing their base forward and closing the distance towards you.

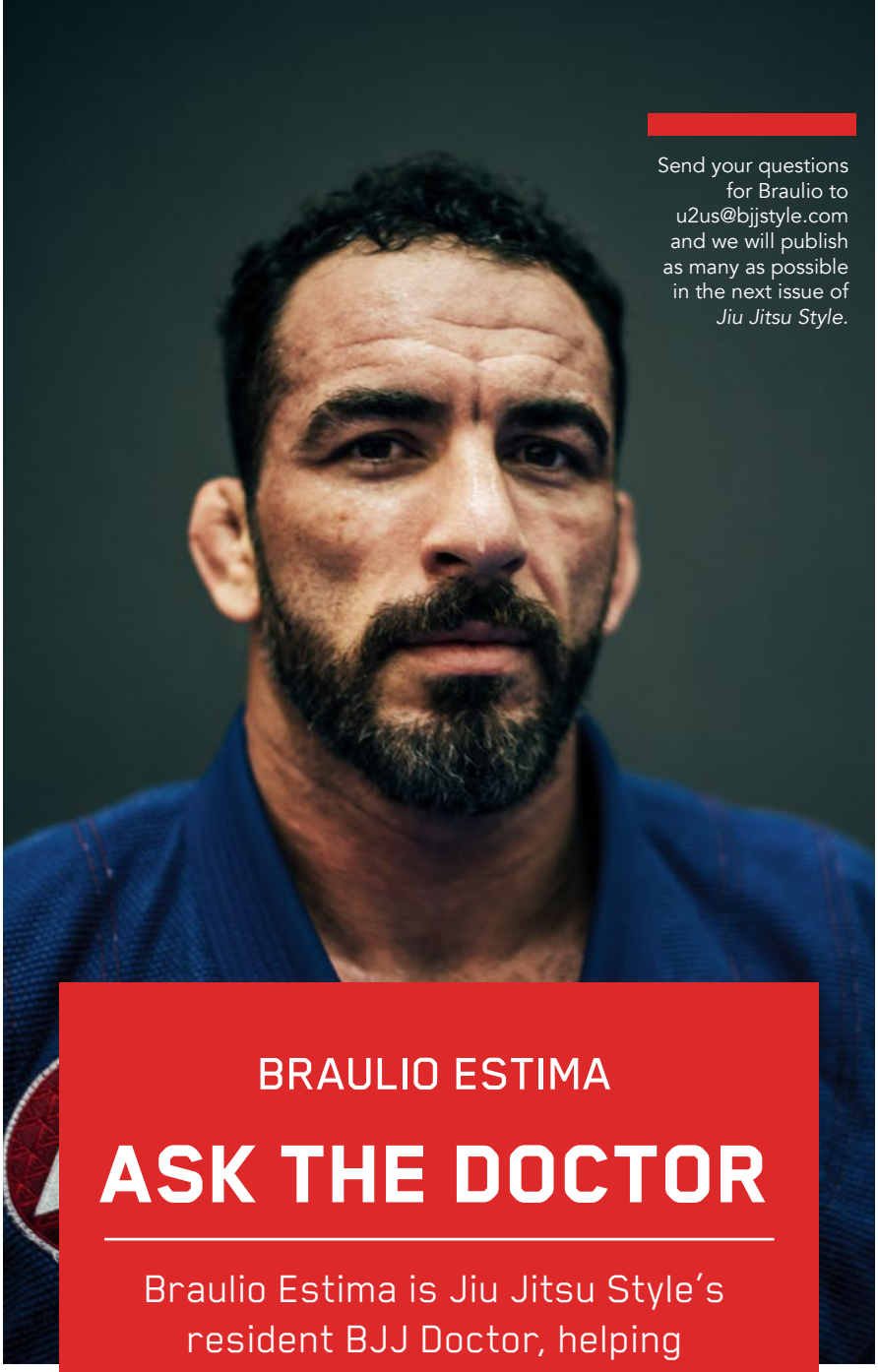


4: Maintain your collar grip with your left hand and straighten your left arm, which sets up a choke.

5/6: Bring your right arm over the back of your opponent's gi to secure the final choking grip

7/8: Close your right elbow down towards the mat and bring your left leg over your opponent's back to prevent the escape and secure the choke.

ESTIMA
IN ACTION
TM
4X WORLD CHAMPION
6X PAN-AMERICAN CHAMPION
5X EUROPEAN CHAMPION
MULTIPLE ADCC CHAMPION
BE THE FIRST TO KNOW
FROM THE CREATORS OF THE MOST STUDIED AND VISITED BJJ VIRTUAL ACADEMY AND GRAPPLING DATABASE MGINACTION.COM...
BE AMONG THE FIRST 500 TO SUBMIT YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS ONLINE FOR EXCLUSIVE PROMOTIONAL CONTENT AND PRE-LAUNCH OFFERINGS FROM THE INACTION TEAM.
REVOLUTIONIZE YOUR GAME ESTIMAINACTION.COM



Send your questions for Braulio to u2us@bjjstyle.com and we will publish as many as possible in the next issue of *Jiu Jitsu Style*.

BRAULIO ESTIMA

ASK THE DOCTOR

Braulio Estima is Jiu Jitsu Style's resident BJJ Doctor, helping prescribe our readers just the right tonic of tips to improve their grappling game.

Hi Braulio,
How do you feel about some of the younger fighters out there at the moment and their approach to marketing themselves? I am talking about the approach of the likes of Gordon Ryan and Dillon Danis. Do you think the way they conduct themselves, calling guys out and kicking-off at tournaments is a good thing, or do they not need to be like this in order to promote themselves?

- Shaun

Hi Shaun,
It's a really tough question to answer. I mean, I don't do it myself, so maybe I don't agree with the idea of pushing yourself too much, even if it's in an aggressive way. Some people take the stance that any publicity is good publicity, and perhaps they have a point. If you don't care about getting haters online, then you can build a big following, but that doesn't mean they are a following willing you to succeed.

Like I say, it's not in my personality to talk trash online, but if people find they are ok with it, and it's normal for them, then I don't have a problem with that. As long as people are happy to deal with the consequences of their actions, then that's fine with me. People use every tool they have to gain attention, that's the way the world works. The only thing I don't really like is the idea of guys talking about other fighters not being on their level; I think that's a bit too much. This doesn't need to be MMA.

Hi Braulio,
This could sound like a stupid question for someone like you, but I'd be interested to know what advice you would give to someone looking to open their very first academy? Were there any mistakes you made when you started that you wish you had avoided? What are the most challenging issues you face day-to-day? Another stupid question, but what are the biggest satisfactions you get from having your own school?

- Hannah

Hi Hannah,
Of course, I made many mistakes when I first opened my academy. I believe the most important thing you need to consider is setting some clear structure straight away, before you even open up. For me, I believe if you affiliate with a well-known team that has this structure in place, then that takes away a lot of the headache.

Other things that are vitally important are that you must keep it clean, so it must be easy to clean, and you must have special classes to cater for the beginners and advanced students separately. I would also say you don't need to spend lots of money to start with on what you would call a prime location. You can start small and work your way up much better without the financial risks. I would maybe suggest starting out renting some space at a leisure centre or gym, that way you can build up slowly and when you have enough students committed to cover the overheads for your own space, that's what you can do.

I would say these are the biggest things to consider when setting up your own school. Less is more; keep it easy to run, keep things simple and you will have more success. Finally, I would personally say it's best to focus just on jiu jitsu, so don't start concerning yourself with putting on other martial arts.

Knee Slice Pass Prevention

Hi Braulio,
Do you have any advice on the best ways to prevent people knee slicing through my reverse de la Riva guard? I seem to get smashed backwards and they knee cut through all the time.

- Caroline

Hi Caroline,
This can be a common problem, but don't worry, if you stick with the principles below, you will have much more success from the position.

1. This is an example of your opponent getting a good control and managing to knee slice through your guard. You cannot let them get their knee on the floor between your arm and leg as pictured, so let's look at how to prevent it. 2. The key to preventing the knee slice is that you MUST keep your right knee tight to your chest, but also have your right arm underneath your knee. By doing this there is no space for your opponent to slice, and they will also struggle to pull your sleeve up and away from your body. 3. If they insist on trying to knee slice, the angle will be wrong, as they cannot slide their knee into a gap between your knee and arm. 4/5/6. As they try to persist with the knee slice, you can bump them forwards and escape to their back as pictured.

Hi Braulio,
I am recovering from knee surgery, and everything is going well, but truth be told I am struggling a little with confidence and really pushing myself to 'test' the boundaries of my knee now. How did you go about your recovery when you injured your neck so badly? Also, have you ever found that nursing or protecting injuries on the mat has led to you opening up other areas of your game?

Many thanks - Dean

Hi Dean,
One thing that I've always done when recovering from surgery is try to be as active during recovery as possible. You MUST explore your limits a little bit in the right environment, so not during jiu jitsu training where anything could happen, but during your physiotherapy sessions instead. I would also say you can look to the positives you will get from these sorts of situations Dean, and let me explain why…

When you have an injury you are trying to protect a bit in jiu jitsu training, it will force you to open up your game and make you explore new things. This is a fantastic thing, because you will find yourself getting better, so don't risk pushing your injuries in training, instead use it as an opportunity to develop new stuff. This is also the best way to build up your confidence – you will have to take things slowly on the mat.

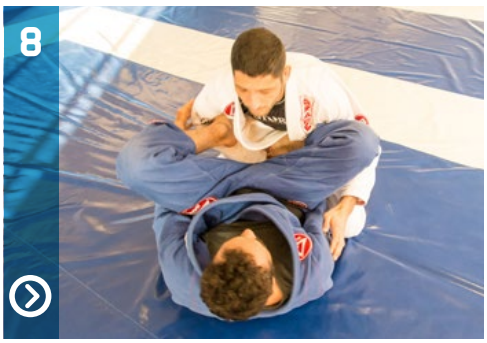
So, in summary, I would say push the boundaries surrounding your injury in physiotherapy, but try to stay active on the mat and use it as a chance to develop your game, while protecting the injury.

Side Control Escape

Hi Braulio,
I think I've seen a clip of you hitting a crazy triangle from side control when you're on the bottom, as well as a cool guard replacement using your legs to create space by isolating one of the guy's arms? I'd love to see the details!

- Rory

Hi Rory,
Here's the side control escape. I actually find this extremely useful against guys who apply lots of pressure, like Roger Gracie, haha.



1. You are on the bottom in side control, with your left arm underneath your opponent's right armpit. 2/3/4. You opponent will have to bring their right arm to the other side of your hip if they want to stop you doing a regular escape, so as they do this, you catch their forearm with your right knee and right hand as pictured. 5/6. Make a solid grip on your opponent's right sleeve with your right hand, at the same time creating enough space to bring your left foot onto their bicep. 7/8. Extend your right leg to bring your opponent's chest off yours and alleviate the pressure. Square your hips up to replace guard.

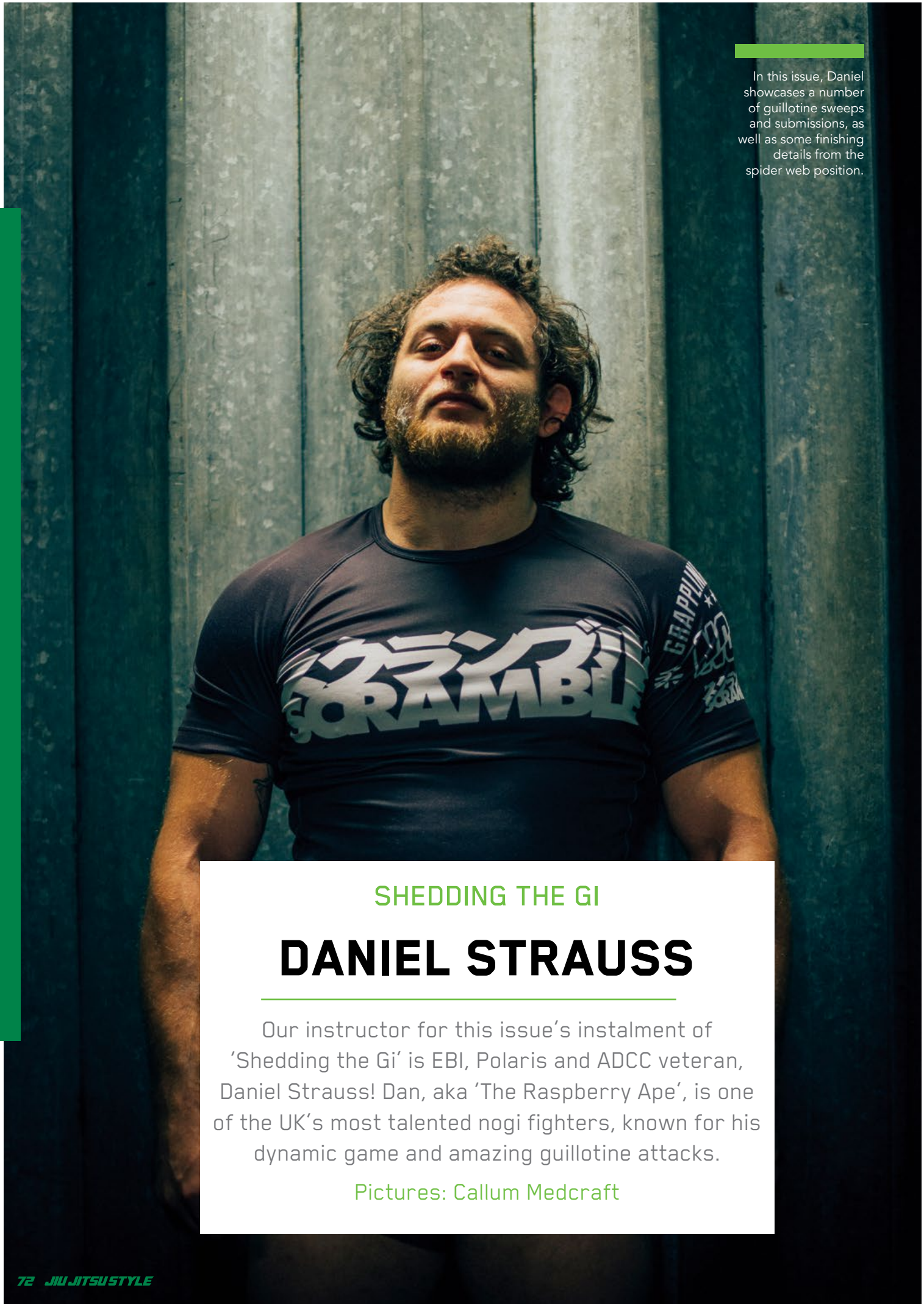
Dealing with the Knee Shield

Hey Braulio,
I'm really struggling to deal with someone who uses an active knee shield when they're in half guard – any advice or best passes?

- Harry

Hi Harry,
I have actually been working on some new grips to help with this sort of situation. Have a look and see how you get on with it.

1. Your opponent has a half guard and an active knee shield. 2/3. Circle your right arm around your opponent's left leg and control their belt. 4/5. Step onto your opponent's left arm with your left shin to break the grip and isolate their limb. 6/7. In a fluid motion, drop your left hip to the mat and bring your body across your opponent's chest. 8. Control their belt with your left hand, so now both of your hands are controlling your opponent's belt. 9/10/11. From here you have a very solid position to kick your right leg free from your opponent's half guard and arrive in side control.



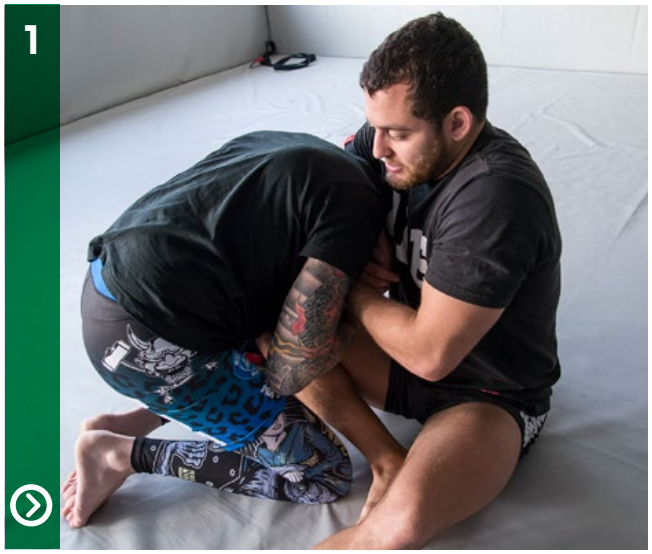
In this issue, Daniel showcases a number of guillotine sweeps and submissions, as well as some finishing details from the spider web position.

SHEDDING THE GI

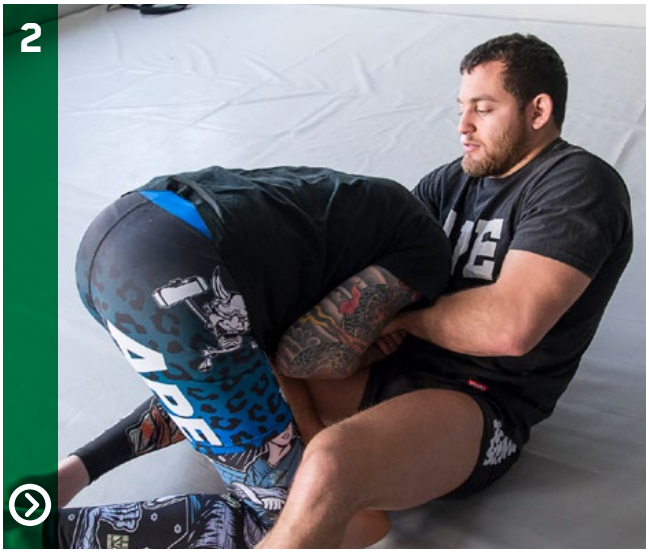
DANIEL STRAUSS

Our instructor for this issue's instalment of 'Shedding the Gi' is EBI, Polaris and ADCC veteran, Daniel Strauss! Dan, aka 'The Raspberry Ape', is one of the UK's most talented nogi fighters, known for his dynamic game and amazing guillotine attacks.

Pictures: Callum Medcraft



1: Starting from an arm out guillotine position from open guard.

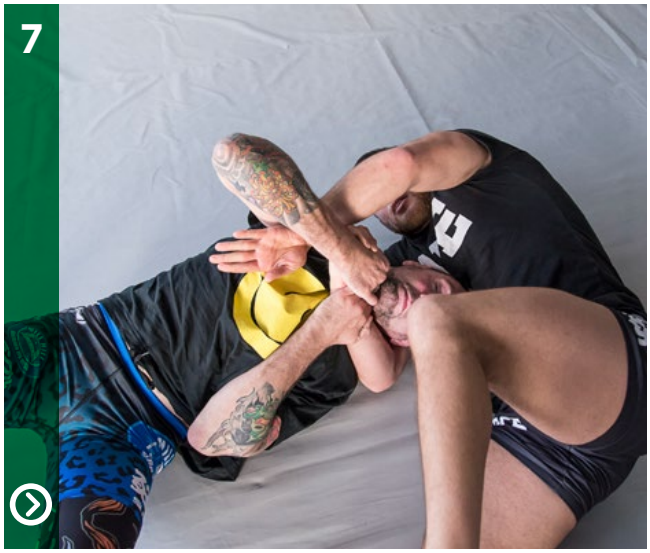


2: Sit back to attempt to finish, with the same side shin as the choking arm across your opponent's hips to extend their body away.

3: The choke does not work, as your opponent has managed to hook the arm across their neck with both hands and created some space.

4: Use control of the head to begin to pull your opponent towards the same side as the choking arm. The goal is to take weight off your opponent's knee on the opposite side. Once this is done, bring the outside leg and hook the inside of your opponent's thigh, close to the knee.

5/6: Kick up with the hook to sweep your opponent, being careful not to kick too close to the hip as they will be heavier there and hard to lift. Once your opponent hits the ground, they often scramble from here to get on top. You can end up losing a dominant position to a half or open guard.



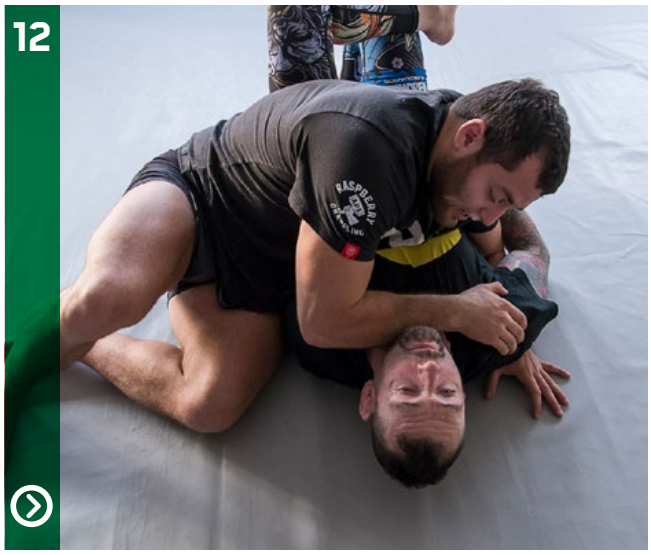
7: The assistance arm (non-choking arm) releases the guillotine and reaches for an underhook on your opponent's far arm.

8: Begin to twist to your knees. As you come up, continue to insert your underhook deeper.

9: Continue to turn to your knees and control under your opponent's neck with the choking arm.

10: Release your opponent's head by sliding the shoulder off the back of their neck.

11: Immediately bring your forearm in front of your opponent's neck and underneath their chin.



12: Secure the forearm by cupping your opponent's shoulder. The reason for the forearm across the neck is that you are very high up the opponent's body and in many cases they will have a near-side underhook on your torso. Because of this there is a risk of them slipping out the back. The forearm across the neck immediately stops the opponent from moving down your body any further.

1: Starting from an arm out guillotine position from open guard.

2: Sit back to attempt to finish, with the same side shin as the choking arm across your opponent's hips to extend their body away.

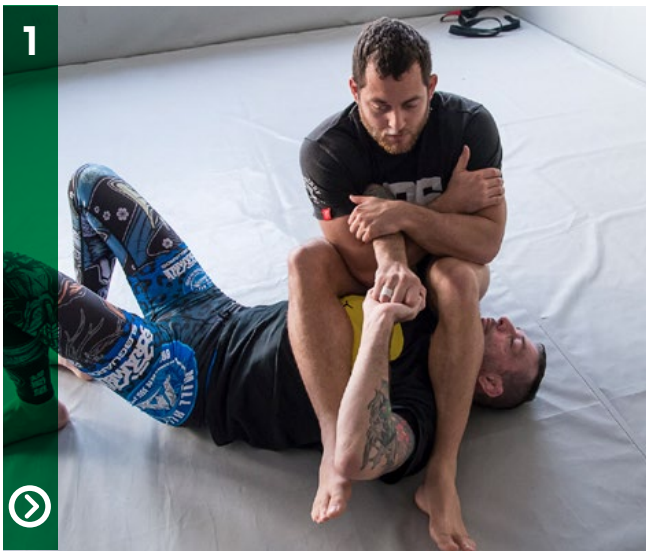
3: Your opponent has not managed to get their hands into the correct defensive position so decides to fall to the side to encourage you to take the sweep and alleviate pressure on their neck.

4/5: We do not want the sweep. We want to finish the choke, but it's very difficult to finish from here. The assistance arm that pulls the choking arm upwards into the neck is in a terrible position and can't generate much force at this angle.

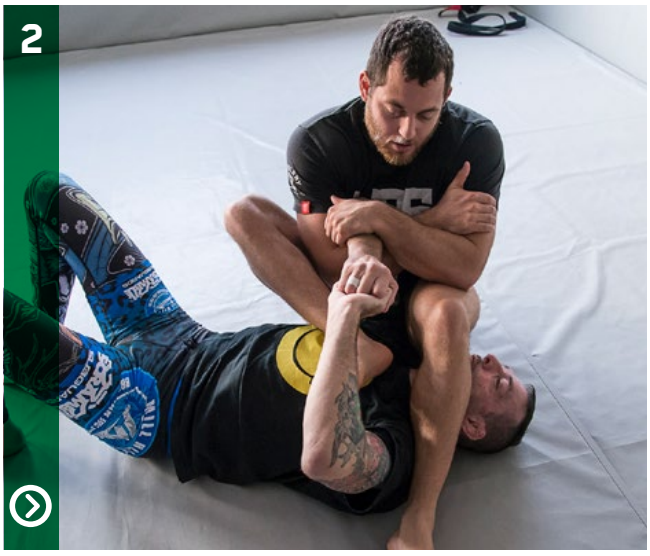
6: Release the grip on the guillotine and drop your left elbow from pointing up to pointing down. To get into this position you will have to bring your body closer into your opponent. You are looking to almost get into an uppercut position.

7: Maintain some tension with the choking arm into your opponent's throat. Make sure you keep the blade of your forearm on your opponent's throat. The assistance hand is going to pinch and push on your other wrist. Do not go palm to palm, or the blade will not be going directly into their throat.

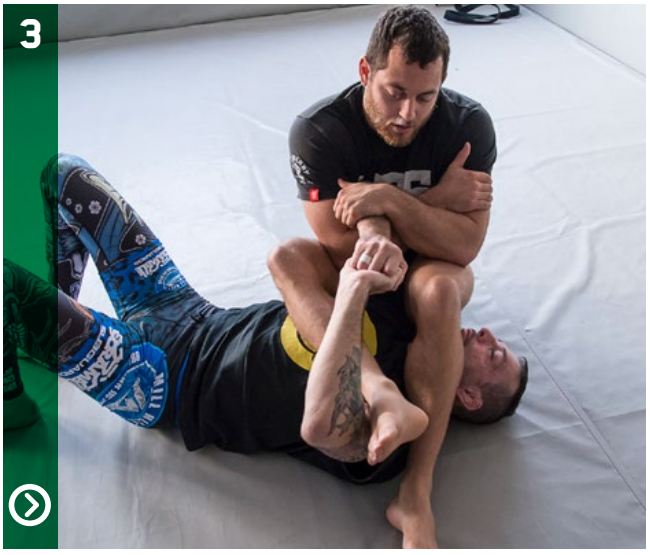
8: Push against the wrist and wait for the tap. Make sure your assistance arm is driving directly into their neck and you're not trying to curl the forearm in.



1: Starting in a standard arm bar position. Use the arm closest to your opponent's hips to hook very deep and lock off on your own bicep. This secures the arm in an anatomically strong position.

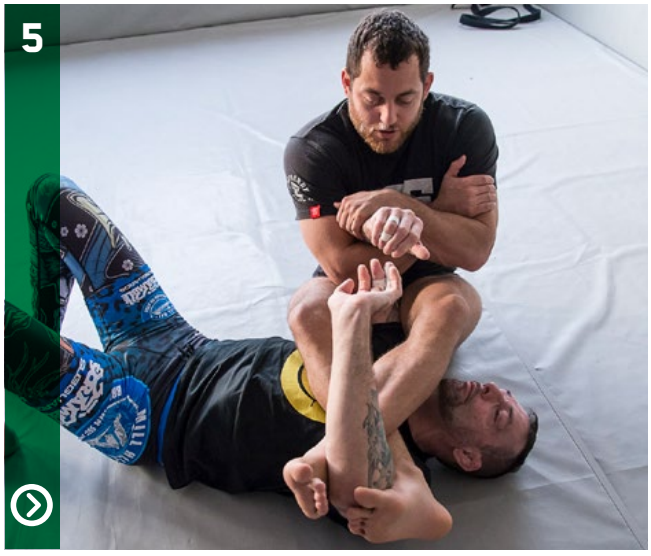


2: Take the leg closest to your opponent's hips and insert, toes first, inside their arms. If your opponent is defending with a tighter arm grip you may need to create some openings with your arms.



3: Slide your right foot all the way through.

4: Use your first inserted foot to create more space and now insert your other leg the same way.



5: Do not try to rip your opponent's arm away explosively at this point. Begin to slowly create tension, pushing forward with your legs and backwards with your arms and body. Continually build the power and your opponent will slowly begin to lose their grip.

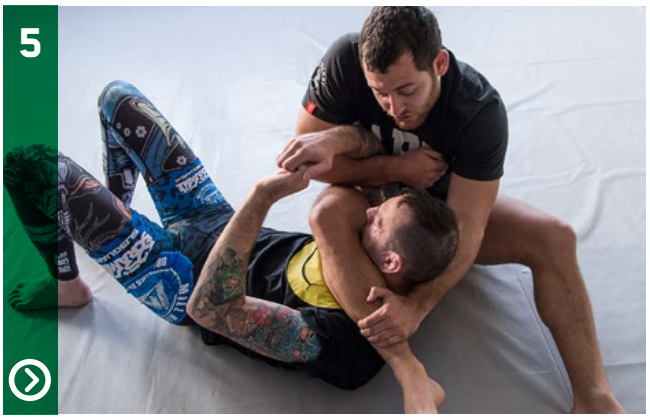
6: Once their hands have split and the arm is free you continue to push away with the legs so they have no opportunity to scramble about and re-grip their hands. Stay in the same tight arm position as you continue to extend their arm away from his body.

1: Though you have followed steps 1-5 in 'armlock grip break', your opponent is being stubborn and you can't break the grip.

2: Remove your leg closest to your opponent's head.

3: Use your arm that isn't controlling the armlock to reach under your opponent's head.

4: Grab on to your own shin. Do not grab the bottom of the shin but rather 2-3 inches up.

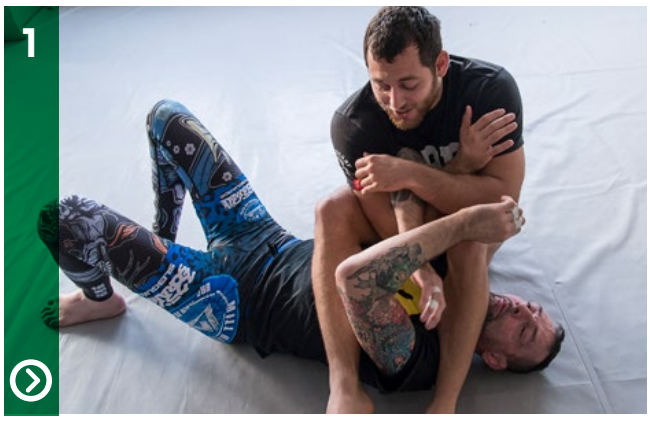


5: Drive your leg into your opponent's neck, whilst simultaneously using the forearm under their head to drive their head up. Your forearm is reinforced from being anchored and pivoting off the shin, so this makes the triangle tighter and stops your opponent from driving their head backwards to create space.

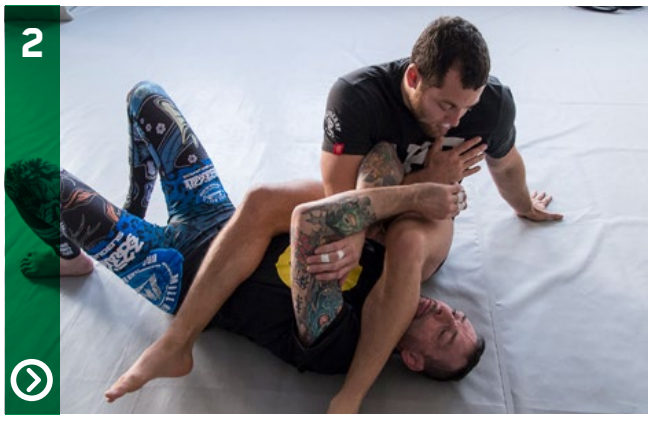
6: Roll backwards. At this point you are committing to the triangle and can release the control of the arm you were attacking.

7: Lock off the triangle on the shin, in the 2-3 inch gap that you left earlier.

8: You can strengthen the triangle by grabbing the shin with both hands. Drive your shin directly downwards into the side of your opponent's neck.



1: Starting in a standard arm bar position. Use the arm closest to your opponent's hips to hook very deep and lock off on your own bicep. This secures the arm in an anatomically strong position.



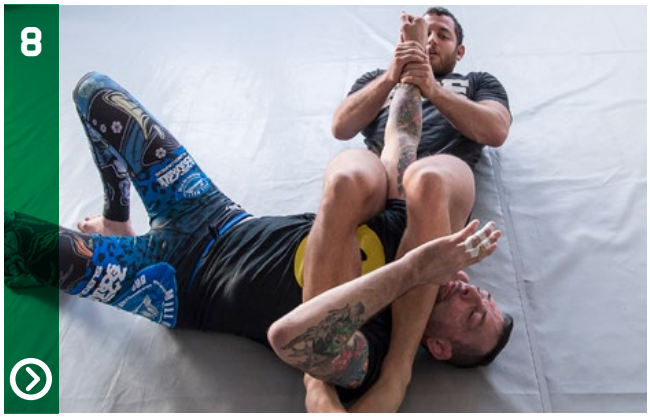
2: Place your arm closest to your opponent's head on the floor.

3/4: Draw the shin of your leg over your opponent's head backwards, in the line of your leg, and rotate your ankle so your toes are pointing downwards. Push off from the hand that is based out, and bring your hips over the top of your opponent so all your weight is going through your shin into their neck.

5: If your opponent doesn't release their hands they will be choked, Put all your weight through your shin into their neck and grab on to the back of their head with both hands. Lift it into your shin to finish the choke.

6: More commonly, your opponent will release their arms to defend the choke as pictured by grabbing your foot.

7: Base out with your left arm and re-grip your opponent's arm with your right arm.



8: Reverse your movement. Sit back to the floor, twisting your foot back and extending your leg back into the arm bar position, except this time they are no longer defending properly.

KARMA

BY

PUNCH STRONG B.J.J

WHAT COMES AROUND ROLLS AROUND

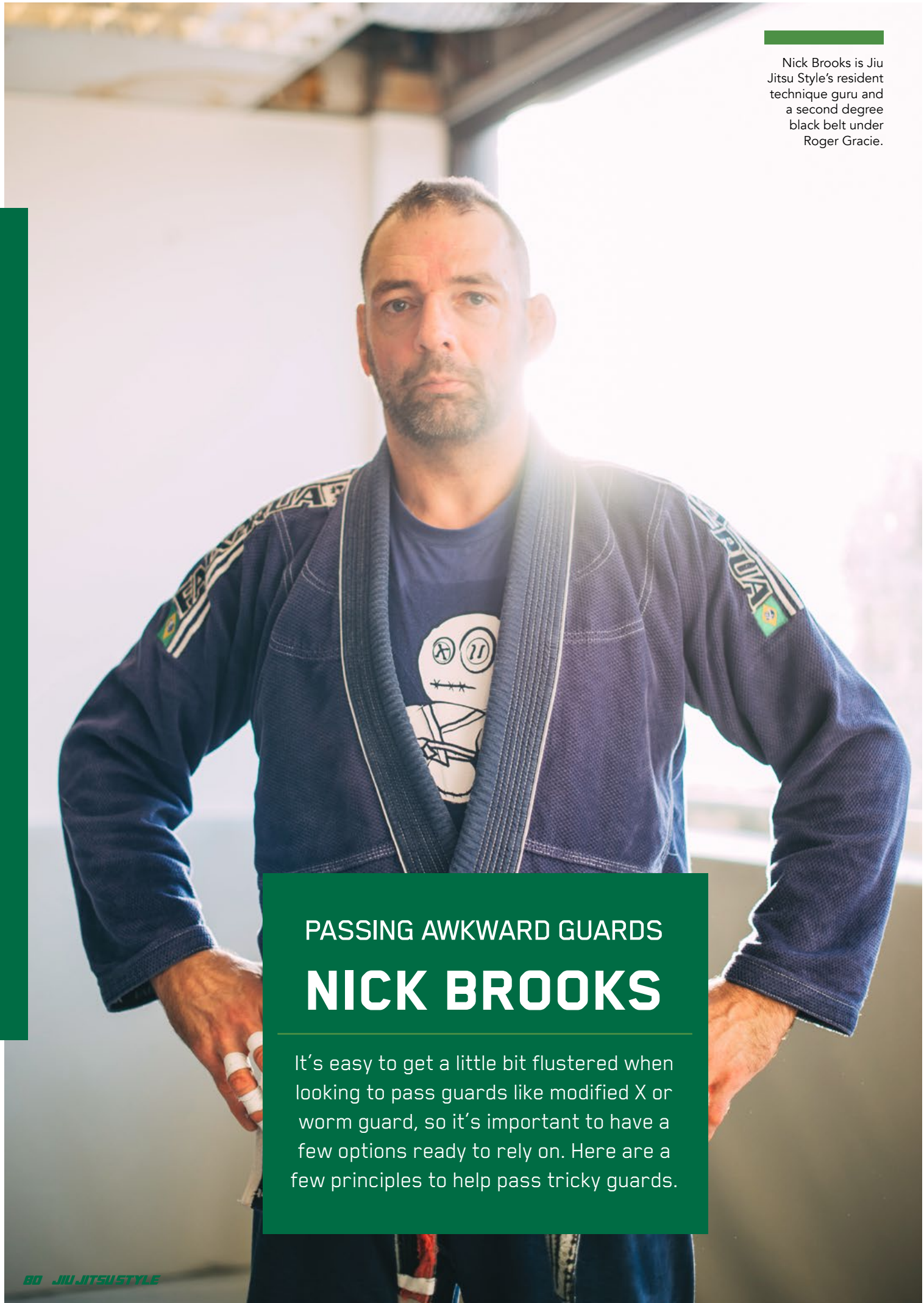
LIGHTWEIGHT

WITHOUT COMPROMISE

A1 - 1.4 KG
A2 - 1.5 KG
A3 - 1.6 KG
A4 - 1.7 KG

350 pearlweave
ripstop pants

PUNCHSTRONG.COM



Nick Brooks is Jiu Jitsu Style's resident technique guru and a second degree black belt under Roger Gracie.

PASSING AWKWARD GUARDS

NICK BROOKS

It's easy to get a little bit flustered when looking to pass guards like modified X or worm guard, so it's important to have a few options ready to rely on. Here are a few principles to help pass tricky guards.

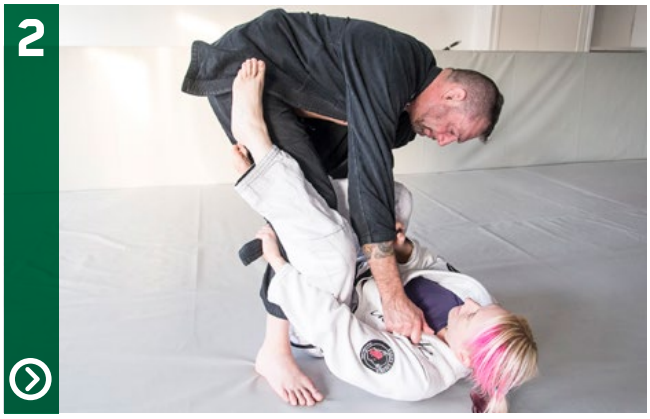
1: Your opponent is in modified x guard, so straight away you must control their right lapel and left trouser leg.

2/3: Push your opponent's legs towards the mat, at the same step in behind their right knee. Keep moving towards your right to turn your opponent's legs away from you and down to the mat. Keep your weight on top of your opponent when their legs hit the mat.

4: Release the grip on your opponent's collar and get a deep grip around their neck. Sprawl backwards to break their grip on your leg.

5/6: Bring your right leg backwards and behind your opponent's right knee. Bring your leg forwards to torque their body awkwardly.

7/8: From here you can link your hands, take your time, and secure the pass.



1/2: Your opponent is in reverse de la Riva guard with the lapel grip securing their leg to your hip. Control your opponent's right lapel with your right arm and the outside of their left knee with your left hand.

3: Push your opponent's legs to the left and down towards the mat, at the same time step in behind their knees as pictured.

4: Keep moving towards your right to turn your opponent's legs away from you and down to the mat. Keep your weight on top of your opponent when their legs hit the mat.

5/6: Bring your right leg backwards and behind your opponent's right knee. Bring your leg forwards to torque their body awkwardly.

7/8: From here you can link your hands, take your time, and secure the pass.

1: Your opponent is in deep half guard and has gained an underhook on your left leg.

2: As soon as you feel them coming in for the underhook with their right arm, place your left hand heavy on the floor, keeping your weight back to prevent them getting right underneath you.

3: By placing your left hand on the floor and pummelling for the underhook, you stop them from gaining an attacking deep half guard. Next, start to drive your left leg backwards to loosen their grip further.

4/5: Keep moving your leg backwards to free it from their grip, then turn your hips as pictured to sit on the floor.

6/7: Lock a triangle with your feet and underhook your opponent's right leg with your right arm.

8: Link your hands together to control your opponent's hip, bring your feet back, while pushing your hips forward to attack the knee bar.

VALOR PRIME 2.0 KIMONO

£94.99

www.valorfightwear.com

ATTACK THE BACK T-SHIRT

$22

www.attackthebback.com

PATCHES O'TOOLE KIMONO PATCHES

$22

www.patchesotoole.com

KIT BAG

FIVE GRAPPLING HOODIE
TBC
www.fivegrappling.com

AESTHETIC RASHGUARD
£30
www.fightaesthetic.co.uk

SCRAMBLE X JUDGE DREDD T-SHIRT
£29.99
www.scramblestuff.com

FIT TO FIGHT | CREATING A RESULTS BASED TRAINING PROGRAM

Are you ready and committed to get more results with your training program in the next 12 weeks than you have in the last 12 months? If the answer is YES! then continue and answer these questions…..

Have you been writing your own programs? Or, have you been jumping from one program to another because you think one is better than the other – but the results aren't matching your effort?

Would you like to take any of these descriptions out of your vocabulary when it comes to your body – "weak, skinny fat, injured, pudgy, skinny, covered up is best", etc.?

You see, most people that write their own programs, or pick ones out of magazines, usually don't achieve positive results. Or, they get some good results at the beginning only to get stuck and then see no more progress. Why? Because it's human nature for us to make things easy for ourselves. You pick exercises you like and that play to your strengths, not improve your weaknesses – which in turn also leads you to spinning your wheels and/or plateau.

I have a solution for you.

You can create a program that will keep you progressing, based on the same process I use to write workouts for my clients. Follow these steps and you'll be able to create a custom program for yourself that will get you leaner, stronger and just generally more athletic.

STEP 1: DYNAMIC WARM UPS
(If I don't tell you to warm up you won't…) Most people skip this, and you won't, because you want to avoid (and fix) nagging injuries that slow you down, and you want to keep progressing without getting stuck just because you weren't smart about how you "prepared" for your training session. You understand that it's worth the 10+ minutes of the right warm ups to get more out of your training session, and fix some weaknesses that would be exposed sooner or later. Before we go into dynamic warm ups we like to decrease stiffness of certain muscles via foam rolling, lacrosse ball, massage stick, etc. I was going to leave this out but I do think it's important to shed light on the importance of this. Spend five minutes on the foam rolling.

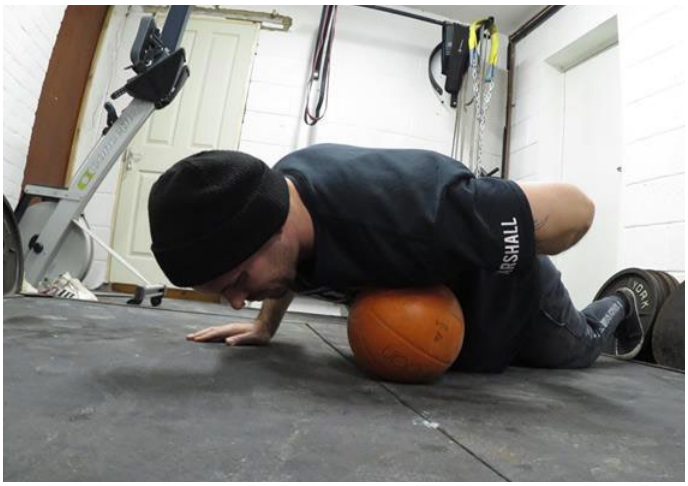
The goal in the warm up is to:

– Increase tissue temperature
– Improve joint lubrication
– Improve nervous system firing
– Improve/optimise alignment
– Integrate nervous and musculoskeletal system
– Prepare and go through the specific movements you'll be doing in the workout

You want to get your body ready for all big training sessions, as well as making sure you work on better movement and on your weaknesses (like stiff hips, weak core, stiff upper back, shoulder stability, ankle mobility, etc.)

Here are some sequences and you can pick and choose 6-10 exercises to put into your warm ups.

SELF MYOFASCIAL RELEASE (SMR) MOVEMENT PATTERNS



PEC STRETCH

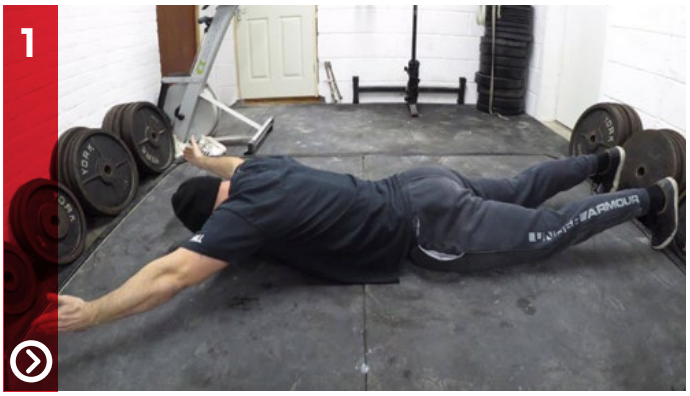
SCAPULA PUSHUP (ON KNEES)

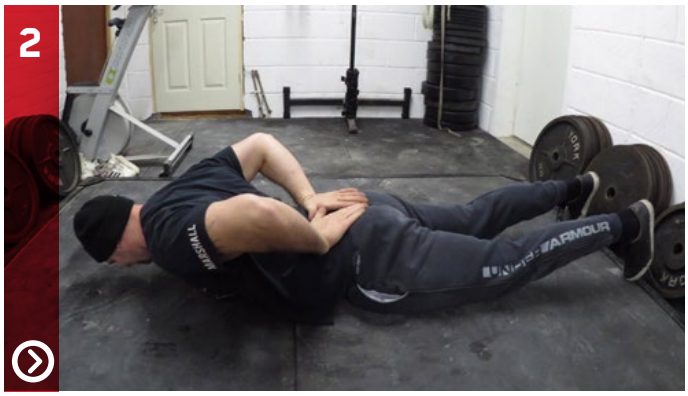
1

2

BLACKBURNS

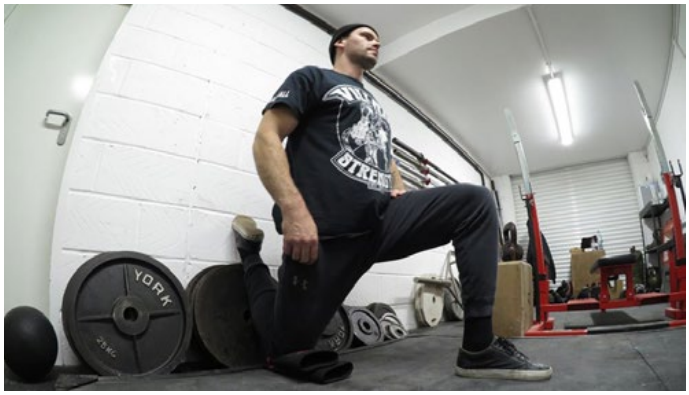
ANDY MARSHALL is the owner of *Villain Strength* and a strength and conditioning expert. He has worked with notable professional athletes including heavyweight boxing contender, Dillian Whyte, and British grappling standout, Dan Strauss.



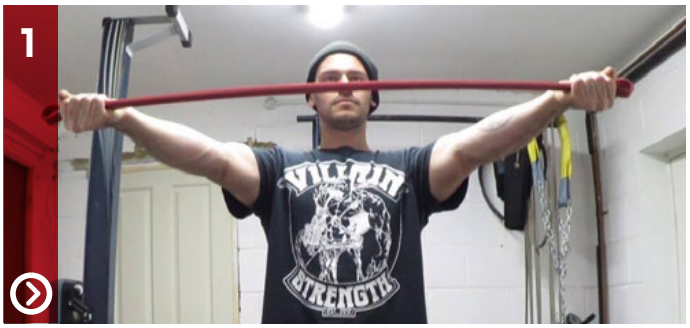


SELF MYOFASCIAL RELEASE (SMR) MOVEMENT PATTERNS

REAR FOOT ELEVATED HIP FLEXOR STRETCH



OVERHAND BAND PULL APARTS INTO SHOULDER DISLOCATES



PIGEON STRETCH ON BENCH

If you're not currently doing any of the above, start doing them and see the difference in how you feel in your training session.

It's important you understand that if you do not move well, you will get injured sooner or later (the worse you move, the sooner it will be). With bad movement and weak links you're just adding weight on top of dysfunction – and THAT my friend, is not a good idea. So as much as you may think this is not "real" training, I'd have you consider it's just as important (if not more) as anything else.

Next issue: Step 2: Which exercises should you include?

MIKE LENG

Unorthodox Nutrition work with athletes worldwide, from local stars right the way through to UFC fighters, Premiership footballers and world champions. They specialise in helping combat athletes lose fat and gain muscle so that they can operate to the maximum of their potential during training and competition.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.UNORTHODOX-NUTRITION.COM

KILLING SUGAR CRAVINGS & ARE ALL CALORIES CREATED EQUAL?

Welcome to another session where I answer your nutrition questions!

We had some really good ones sent in this month and it was really tough to choose just a couple of people to help! Every month I see more and more people getting confused by nutrition and how to structure it specifically for grappling. Either all the advice out there seems to be aimed at body builders, or everything seems to contradict everything else!

As always, if you are looking to get a better understanding of nutrition, then I highly recommend speaking to your coach or a professional about having a plan set up for your individual needs. Consulting your doctor before undertaking any kind of new nutrition plan is also heavily advised.

Many people have a terrible experience when it comes to nutrition as they simply don't know what they are doing, and it's not their fault. There are many schools of thought out there, and they often contradict each other - who isn't going to get confused! Where do you start? Do you fast? Do you carb cycle? Do you have cheats? Do you only eat fruit that has been picked by a female Unicorn under the light of a full moon?

The list of confusing topics is endless.

Not only does it seem that setting up a nutrition plan causes people problems, but then adjusting that plan or tailoring it to your own individual needs keeps tripping people up!

So, I'm here to help.Here are a few that really caught my eye this month.

QUESTION 1: I really can't stand veggies, and I struggle massively to eat them. I do, however, like fruit, so I had two questions really. 1. Can I get all my five-a-day from fruit? 2. What supplement would you recommend to replace the lack of greens and vegetables in my diet?

Yes you can get your five-a-day from fruit, although your digestive system probably wouldn't thank you for it. You need to find a way to sneak multiple veggies into your diet to get the health benefits (health is ALWAYS the number one priority).Try the following:

- Make your own sauces from multiple veggies. There are a million recipes for this online and they taste amazing. This way you will get lots of veggies but won't taste them.
- In the same vein, get yourself a slow cooker. Veggies that are slow cooked in stews, soups and other dishes are a great way to get more in but again, don't taste like veggies.
- Start taking a multi-vitamin, or a greens drink once or twice a day.

QUESTION 2: I hear lots of different information surrounding the amount of protein your body can handle in one meal – is there an optimal number of grams of protein that we should ingest in a meal? I tend to eat three times a day if that helps. And, also, I am assuming I should have protein snacks straight after training?

To be honest, that theory is total bulls**t. It has never been supported in any study or literature. What does matter is the total protein amount. For most people this is between 2-3 grams per kilo of body weight. Now, some people can't eat a lot of protein in one sitting as it gives them digestion issues, and some people do fine. I would divide your total protein intake between your three meals and your workout nutrition.

QUESTION 3: We have always been taught that saturated fats raise our LDL cholesterol, but I have been reading some contradictory information recently, saying saturated fats help raise good cholesterol. What's your take on this?

Firstly, if we are talking about what effect your diet is having on your blood readings, you first need to know your blood readings. If you don't, you're just playing in the dark. If you are within a healthy range then it's not something I would worry about.

Saying that, saturated fat isn't the devil that the media would have you believe and in fact it is essential for good hormone production (like testosterone). Unless you are eating HUGE amounts of saturated fat I wouldn't worry about it. Have the steak!

QUESTION 4: I am trying really hard to cut sugar out of my diet, but I am struggling badly with cravings. I am also looking to generally reduce my portion sizes, as I used to eat way too much. Do you have any general advice on how to manage cravings, or foods to look to if I want to help with cravings?

I use the following as free foods to kill cravings (hunger and sweet) for clients and that works really well:

- Celery
- Broccoli
- Sugar free jelly
- Sugar free ice pops
- Sweet whey protein
- Making a 'protein pudding' from whey
- Extremely dark chocolate (just a couple of pieces)
- Green beans
- Iceberg lettuce
- Asparagus
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber

QUESTION 5: I recently listened to a podcast with Oli Geddes, who talked through his pretty unique way of getting the correct number of calories he needs, from what was, essentially, fast food. Do you believe that all calories are created equal and it shouldn't matter what types of food they come from?

Everyone keeps asking me about this! I'm sure there is some kind of conspiracy to create beef between me and Oli (which is a terrible idea as he would straight up merc me, lol).

The answer isn't that simple really. Calories do matter, but what those calories are made up of is extremely important. This is a method known as 'If It Fits Your Macros' (IIFYM) and I have covered this in past issues. Now, I highly doubt that Oli is just eating junk all day long. He is probably eating a very well rounded diet but allowing himself some wiggle room so that he can have a treat while staying within his calorie allotment.

For some people, this is a really good idea if they are disciplined enough to just have a little treat food, then stop. Many, however, can't stop at one piece of food and end up going on a week-long chocolate and ice cream bender. As you are reading this you know which person you are. If you struggle to stop at one piece of food then it probably isn't for you.

These are all great questions that highlight the vast differences that people can have in their lives that effect their nutritional approach. Remember that there is no perfect diet. The best plan is the one that fits your lifestyle, that you can do consistently and that gives you results.

If you have any questions then please send them to:

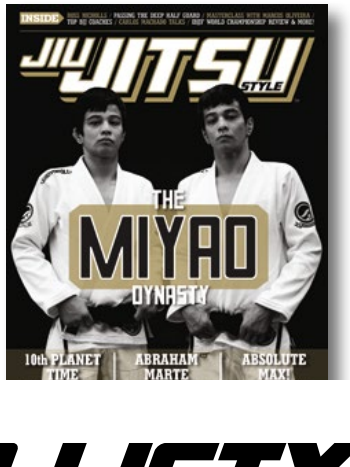
U2US@BJJSTYLE.COM

Stay healthy,

Mike

enter JJSBATTLE5
during checkout
to get 5% discount
戰
BATTLE GEAR
WWW.BATTLEGEARBJJ.COM
NEVER STOP
NEVER GIVE UP
BATTLE
戰
http://www.facebook.com/battlegi
#battlegearbjj

GARTISTA
獨創的GA
GARTISTA.COM



BJJSTYLE.COM

UK, EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE

DO YOU WANT YOUR PRODUCTS REVIEWED?
To have your jiu jitsu gear featured in JJS, send us an email at info@bjjstyle.com

REVIEW CORNER

AESTHETIC "KOI" KIMONO

AVAILABLE VIA WWW.FIGHTAESTHETIC.CO.UK FOR £99

True to their name, Aesthetic have quickly established a reputation for designing uniquely eye-catching kimonos. Following on from the extremely successful 'Ombre' and 'Ombre Pure', fans of the brand are now treated to the release of the 'Koi', which takes its roots from Japanese culture as a sign of strength in the face of adversity.

The traditional Aesthetic hexagon logo, flanked by two koi carp, sits on both upper sleeve sections of the jacket, offering homage to the spirit of Japan. The use of red logos with grey and black koi detailing really does pop nicely on the white jacket, and this detailing is also replicated on the upper left thigh section of the trousers.

Though the exterior branding is really slick, our favourite design detail lies within the jacket. The inner neck and shoulder section features a beautifully colourful abstract design, with plenty of vibrant shades of red and blue to draw attention.

In terms of the general product build and quality, the 'Koi' is up there as one of Aesthetic's premium offerings. The jacket is made from 450gsm pearl weave cotton, while the trousers are made from cotton twill. The twill pants deserve a special mention, as Aesthetic really have found a winning formula here in terms of comfort during rolling.

With an ever-growing list of products within their range, we are continually impressed by Aesthetic and their ability to hit the nail on the head with every release. Though we are huge fans of the flashy 'Ombre' kimono, the 'Koi' has moved into pole position as our favourite of their products to date. As always, their kimonos also represent excellent value for money, and, at £99, the 'Koi' is no exception.

EDWIN NAJMI BACK TAKES AND MORE BACK TAKES

AVAILABLE VIA WWW.DIGITSU.COM FOR $39.99 OR VIA THE DIGITSU APP FOR £18.99

Few athletes making the transition to the black belt division have had such a devastating impact at competitions as Edwin Najmi. We've always been a huge fan of Romulo Barral's protégé, as his strategy is based around always hunting for submissions, from every angle, and putting on exciting matches.

We reviewed Edwin's latest instructional series, 'Back takes and more back takes', via Digitsu's awesome IOS app. Though you can purchase the series on DVD, we'd highly recommend the IOS app version, as the user interface is clean, clear and easy to navigate. We found it easier to rewind and switch between videos on our iPad, compared to using a conventional DVD player.

As the title suggests, this series is all about securing the back, and there are some fantastic gems of wisdom within the content. Not only does Edwin cover slight variations on conventional back attacks, but also a great variety of unorthodox back takes and transitions from scrambles. As we all know, jiu jitsu can be a game of inches, so it was great to see how Najmi manages to secure solid control from wild transitions.

This is a great purchase for fans of the 'modern' game, or anyone looking to broaden their horizons and develop some unorthodox back taking abilities.

TECHNIQUES INCLUDED:

1. Introduction
2. Back take: Seatbelt position
3. Back take: The truck position
4. Back take: Going with the side roll
5. Back take: Traditional falling method
6. Back take: The truck from side control
7. Back take: The truck off Toreando
8. Submission: Lapel bow & arrow
9. Submission: Lapel triangle
10. Submission: Lapel bow & arrow 2
11. Submission: Inverted triangle
12. Control: Countering the escape
13. Control: Throw by to truck
14. Pass: Najmi stomp to truck
15. Pass: Najmi stomp to truck 2
16. Pass: Double knee slide
17. Pass: Deep half to bow and arrow
18. Pass: Deep half to inverted triangle
19. Pass: Long-step to truck
20. Pass: Knee-over truck
21. Pass: Knee-over, smash, truck
22. Pass: Jump over to truck

THE HIP CLAMP GUARD WITH SAMIR CHANTRE

AVAILABLE VIA THE BUDO VIDEOS IOSAPP FOR £18.99

The half guard can be a cruel mistress. Too often we find ourselves conceding head control; being smashed awkwardly to the mat before begging our partner to just pass already. Sound familiar? Don't worry - Samir Chantre has a solution…

The 'Hip Clamp Guard' offers a refreshingly unique way to approach the half guard, allowing you the perfect platform to invert, set up leg attacks and arrive on top in modern passing positions. Perhaps most importantly, this modern guard offers a great way to manage distance and prevent your opponent from stacking or smash passing.

The instructional series is available within the Budo Videos IOS app, and it's worth noting you must be running IOS version 10 for it to work. Priced at £18.99, there are twenty videos for you to study, which seems to be the norm for a series within this price range.

Samir's instruction is clear and concise, with the multiple camera angles and perfect audio quality we've come to expect of a Budo Videos production. All in all, this is a unique watch, and a 'must buy' for half guard players. Audio is also available in Japanese.

CONTENT:

1. Intro
2. Key points
3. Hip clamp sweep
4. Lapel grip sweep
5. To straight ankle lock
6. To toe hold
7. To leg drag
8. Rolling under back take 1
9. Rolling under back take 2
10. Rolling under back roll sweep
11. Rolling under knee bar
12. Rolling under calf slicer
13. X-Guard sweep
14. X-Guard sweep to leg drag
15. X-Guard sweep to the back
16. Berimbolo
17. Straight ankle
18. Far leg technical stand up
19. Far leg toe hold
20. Outro

changing
the
game
adidas
jiu-jitsu
cimac
adidas
www.cimac.net
OFFICIAL BJJ AND MMA DISTRIBUTOR UK
adidas bjj / mma equipment and apparel by
cimac | cimac house | highlands road
shirley | solihull | west midlands | b90 4ng
tel: 0121 711 3612 email: sales@cimac.net | www.cimac.net

RAY STEVENS ACADEMY

Olympic Judo Silver Medalist • Roger Gracie Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Black Belt

WWW.RAYSTEVENSACADEMY.CO.UK

ENQUIRIES@RAYSTEVENSACADEMY.CO.UK

07753606172 / 07956676452

CLASSES - MONDAY/WEDNESDAY/FRIDAY/SATURDAY

GI SPOTLIGHT | LUCKY GI 'HEMP TZAR'

OVERVIEW
Long-time kimono connoisseurs, Lucky Gi, have created one of the most durable and comfortable products we've ever tested. The 'Hemp Tzar' comes in at a premium price, but you can expect premium performance and longevity. It looks pretty damn slick, too.

WHY HEMP?
FINALLY we get our hands on a Lucky Gi product and – even better – we test our first 100% hemp kimono at the same time. You've probably heard whispers about hemp gis and their mystical powers, so let's set the record straight and offer up a few facts about the benefits of hemp.

- Hemp has a tensile strength close to six times greater than that of cotton, making it an extremely durable material for kimonos.
- Hemp fabrics are hypo-allergenic and non-irritating on the skin, with current tests indicating that hemp can kill staph and other bacteria it comes into contact with.
- Hemp is often considered an environmental 'super fibre', as it's a high yield crop that produces significantly more fibre per acre than cotton.
- Hemp material 'breathes' well, so is very good in humid climates (or nasty post workout gym bags) as it resists mildew.

THE JACKET
As with all Lucky Gi products, the branding and styling on this jacket are eye catching to say the least. The hemp material hasn't been bleached, so the jacket colouring is a sort of off white, which in turn works very well with the red branding. The trademark Lucky Gi branding sits across the back of the jacket, with a Lucky Gi lapel patch located on the left chest section. Other design features include red lapel piping, red stars on the sides of the jacket and red bands around the sleeves. Finally, there's a cool Lucky Gi on both shoulder sections on the arms – all in all, this gi is as gangster as it comes!

TROUSERS
The trousers, which are also made from 100% hemp, are styled a little more subtly, with a Lucky Gi logo on the upper-right hip section. They are secured via a standard drawstring (also made from hemp) and pretty much do what they say on the tin. Nothing fancy, but nothing negative to comment on.

It's amazing just how far kimono technology has come. In creating the Nanō, Kingz have released a top notch, ultra-lightweight kimono that would rival the durability of heavy-duty products on the market from just a few years ago. In all honesty, it's hard to pick any technical fault here, and purchase decisions can only really be based on the aesthetics and the pricing (though the price is pretty awesome considering the quality).

DETAILS
Another great thing about Lucky Gi products is that there is always a wide range of sizes to choose from, ensuring you get the exact fit you're after. We were interested to see how a hemp product would shrink after some tough testing and multiple washes – the answer is not much at all. We saw a little shrinkage in the sleeves to bring the cuff perfectly in line with our wrist, but that was about it.

In terms of rolling performance, the hemp fabric feels super soft and comfortable, which was somewhat of a surprise considering the added strength you get over cotton. It's not a horrible, heavy material either, and the gi still maintains a light, 'airy' feel when training – it really was a joy to wear.

SUMMARY
Ok, there's no denying that a $420 price tag will instantly raise some consumer's eyebrows, but you have to look past that and focus on the clear benefits that come from hemp kimonos. The price is steep, but buying an all hemp gi really is an investment, and you can expect the Hemp Tzar to still be looking fresh and ready for training many years down the line. For us, it's made its way into our group of regular rotation kimonos as our 'go to' for training.

AVAILABLE VIA MYLUCKYGI.COM FOR $420

TOURNAMENT REVIEW

PICTURES: BLANCA MARIA GARCIA

FIVE SUPER LEAGUE 2016

FIVE Grappling marked a return to the jiu jitsu scene with their second rendition of the Super League, following on from their inaugural pro event in August of 2015.

It was Gracie Barra's young gun, Edwin Najmi, who would come away with the title off the back of some devastating performances and submission finishes in the 8-man Super League. The bracket also saw the return of both Bill Cooper and Sean Roberts, who have been quiet on the competition scene in recent years.

In a unique twist, there was an impressive 23 super fights added to the show, which were contested by some of the best brown and purple belt athletes on the circuit.

Though the line-up was not as star-studded as that of the first Super League, and with the omission of a women's bracket, the show was still extremely entertaining, with fantastic jiu jitsu on display.

8 MAN SUPER LEAGUE

QUARTER FINALS

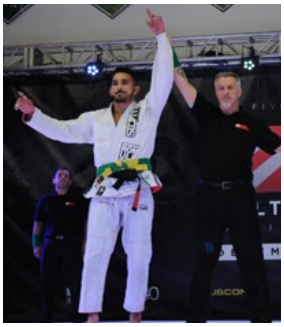
EDWIN NAJMI DEFEATED BILL COOPER VIA DARCE CHOKE
SEAN ROBERTS DEFEATED MICHAEL LIERA JR VIA DECISION
JOHN COMBS DEFEATED BRIAN MORIZI VIA GUILLOTINE
MARCELO MAFRA DEFEATED MANSHER KHERA VIA DECISION

SEMI FINALS

JOHN COMBS DEFEATED SEAN ROBERTS VIA DECISION
EDWIN NAJMI DEFEATED MARCELO MAFRA VIA DECISION

FINAL

EDWIN NAJMI DEFEATED JOHN COMBS VIA ESTIMA LOCK



8 MAN SUPER LEAGUE

SUPER FIGHTS

CATHERINE FEHRO PERRET DEFEATED HEATHER RAFTERY VIA DECISION
JESSICA OLIVIERA FLOWERS DEFEATED SHAYNA BASZLER VIA ARMBAR
FRANCISCO ITURRALDE DEFEATED STEPHEN MARTINEZ VIA DECISION
PITER FRANK DEFEATED LANCE GLYNN VIA ARMBAR
BRANDON WILLINSKI DEFEATED CHAD GEORGE VIA DECISION
SHANNON GUGERTY DEFEATED NOAH TILLIS VIA GUILLOTINE
CASEY RYAN DEFEATED FERNANDO MACHADO VIA ANKLE LOCK
HENRY IRIBE DEFEATED RON HENDERSON VIA DECISION
SERGIO RIOS DEFEATED RODRIGO ANTUNES VIA DECISION
ALBERT AGUIRRE DEFEATED HARLAN BERK VIA CHOKE
NIELS BURGESS DEFEATED RAFAEL DEON DAVIS VIA DECISION
JAIME FLETCHER DEFEATED JORGE FARFAN VIA DECISION
MATT BAKER DEFEATED JEREMY BARDEN VIA CHOKE
DOMINIQUE BELL DEFEATED KANIELA KAHUANUI VIA TRIANGLE
PJ BARCH DEFEATED MOISES LOPEZ VIA DECISION
THOMAS KEENAN DEFEATED DOM HOSKINS VIA FOOTLOCK
DAVID LEE DEFEATED JOE NUNES VIA DECISION
VINCE COLCOL DEFEATED MILAN BASIC VIA DECISION
WASEAM DANNAOUI DEFEATED TRISTAN LESECQ VIA DECISION
JEAN PAUL LEBOSNOYANI DEFEATED ANTHONY AGUILERA VIA ARMBAR
JOSHUA CISNEROS DEFEATED ARES LOYNAB VIA KIMURA
ANGEL FUENTES DEFEATED NATHAN OTTER VIA DECISION
JOAQUIM O'CAMPO DEFEATED HASSAN ALEXANDER VIA DECISION

WORDS: MATT BENYON

WHEN IN DOUBT, ROLL ABOUT

You never regret going to training, you only regret not going.

A tired saying, perhaps, but it's true.

No matter how busy, tired, or lazy you are feeling, if you make it to the mats, you'll feel good after. This holds true when you travel, too. Of course, travelling costs money, but as jiu jitsu practitioners, many of us get to travel more frequently than others, due to the international nature of our sport. We understand that a trip overseas is within our reach if we save our money for a few months and as a result, we travel.

I am lucky enough that Scramble and Polaris afford me a number of opportunities for international travel. Whether filming in New York for Polaris, or training with sponsored athletes in Japan (and visiting extended family), there is nothing I like more than training at new academies. Don't get me wrong. I am fairly socially awkward (sometimes extremely so), I am not sporting at all (I hate all other sports except jiu jitsu). And I am, basically, a very average brown belt in terms of abilities. But I can safely say, after a decade of training jiu jitsu, I genuinely love the sport, and feel at home on the mats. I will always make time to train, and I'd like to share a few of my more memorable stories.

On one of my first trips to New York, I had arranged to meet Dan Covel, one of our Scramblers, at Marcelo Garcia Academy for the morning class. The night before, I went out with my business partner Ben and his brother, Matt. I duly informed them at the start of the night that I'd just be having a couple of drinks before turning in nice and early and having a good rest so that I'd be fresh for training the next morning. (SCENES MISSING)

It's four a.m. and I have just murdered another U2 song on the karaoke machine in a dingy Japanese bar somewhere downtown. Ben, Matt and I clink glasses aggressively, covering us and the bar with cheap Japanese whiskey. (SCENES MISSING) I peel my eyes open, one at a time, and let out a moan. Whoops. But, I am determined to go training. I shower for around half an hour, trying to scrub the smell of alcohol from my pores. I gargle with half a bottle of Listerine until my gums feel like they have melted off my teeth, and I grind my way through the daytime class at Marcelo's, swearing to myself I'd never drink again and trying not to breathe on anyone. It was great fun, and totally worth it.

Another time, Mikey, Ben and I were in Tokyo filming for Polaris. It sounds glamorous, but the days are mostly made up of dragging very heavy camera equipment on long walks through swelteringly humid city air. After spending the daytime filming Masakazu Imanari, we made our way to Paraestra Tokyo to meet world champ Rikako Yuasa, another Scrambler. We must have arrived there after eight, having traipsed and sweated around the city all day long. We could barely carry our bags let alone think about training. But I had brought my gi, and it must have been half past nine before I took it out and got changed. I sparred for an hour or so, completely exhausted, and loving every minute. I rolled with Rikako, Yukinori Sasa, and a couple of pro fighters from the Paraestra stable. The pain of late night training was somewhat alleviated by the pleasure of late night eats available in Tokyo, however.

> "IT'S FOUR A.M. AND I HAVE JUST MURDERED ANOTHER U2 SONG ON THE KARAOKE MACHINE IN A DINGY JAPANESE BAR SOMEWHERE DOWNTOWN"

One of the most bizarre and enjoyable nights of my life was when I was in LA for Metamoris: Sakuraba vs Renzo. We had, somehow, finagled a good relationship with the Japanese MMA legend and were producing his training gear for him at that time. He was given front row tickets to the show, but only brought a couple of people with him, and so he passed the tickets on to us. Ben and I could not turn down the opportunity to attend, and it did not disappoint. The party afterwards was just as ridiculous in reality as it sounds on paper: we had dinner and drinks in an Irish bar with Josh Barnett and his partner, followed by the official after-party. The first person I see as I walk through the bar is Renzo, who claps us all on the shoulders and greets us like old friends. We drink whiskey with Renato Laranja. I fear for my life as Xande Ribeiro shoulder barges me out of the way as he heads for the bar. We laugh and drink some more with the Newaza Apparel crew.

The next day, we were due to attend an open mat at the Budo Videos headquarters. Apparently not having learned my lesson from New York, I scrape myself off the hotel floor and head out there. What followed was about two hours of the most fun training I've ever had, including my first meeting with a certain someone by the name of Garry Tonon.

These stories involve far too much alcohol, upon reflection. Anyway, one more, in New York again. After a hectic few days of filming, I had a morning free. I checked the schedules of all the places we'd visited and found that Unity BJJ had an open mat and decided to attend. I felt the same trepidation I always feel when visiting a new academy - and especially one that is home to well-known jiu jitsu stars, but pushed through it and went training.

Everybody was very welcoming, and the level was extremely high. I particularly enjoyed being smashed into the mat (in a nice way) by a blue belt and having my limbs folded and rearranged into fascinating new shapes by a 110 kg brown belt. By the end of the session the mats were basically a swimming pool of body hair and sweat, and I had tapped more times than I care to remember, but it was totally worth it. I quickly showered and changed and made the walk downtown to Renzo Gracie academy for more filming. It was summer in New York and I had trained hard, and these two factors meant that for the next three hours or so I was pouring with sweat. I sweated through my t-shirt and through my trousers and left questionable puddles wherever I went. But it was worth it, it's always worth it.

If you're reading this, drop me a message on Instagram and let me know what you'd like to see in future columns.

MATT BENYON
Creative Director
Polaris Pro & Scramble Brand

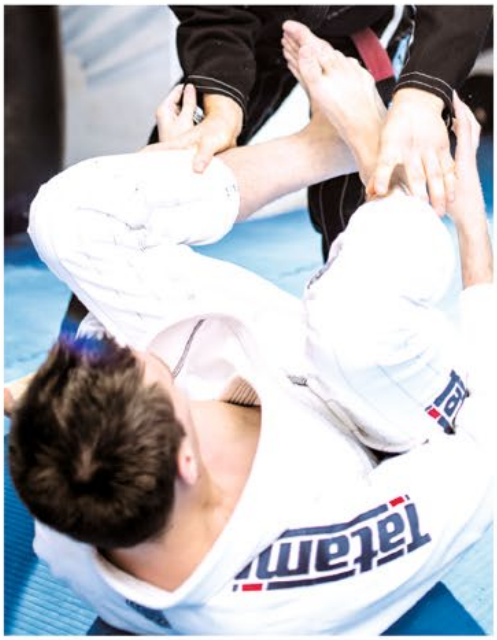
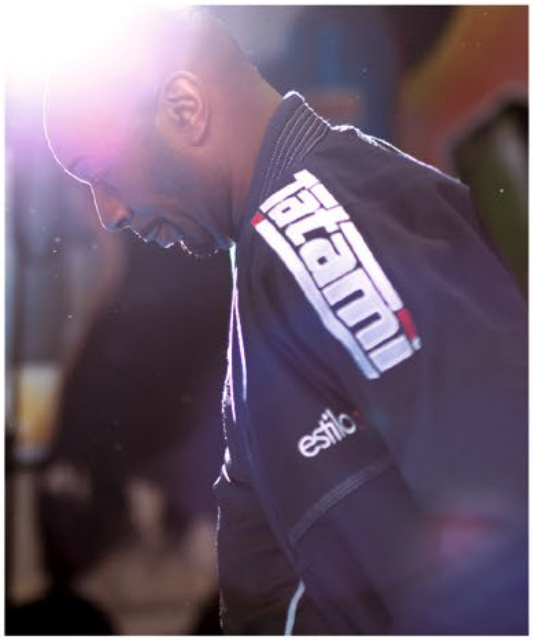
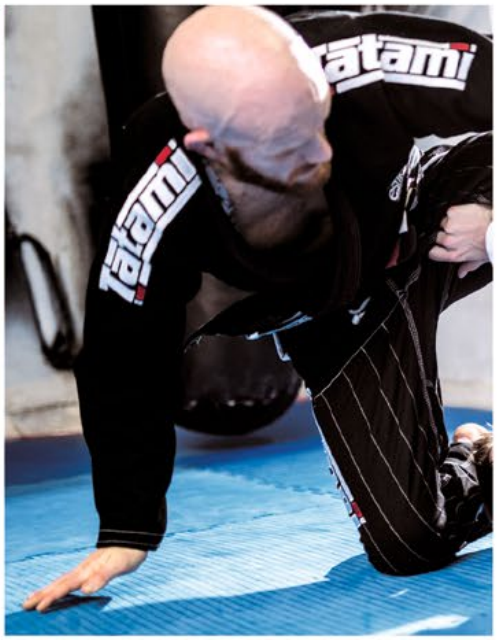
WWW.POLARIS-PRO.ORG
WWW.SCRAMBLESTUFF.COM

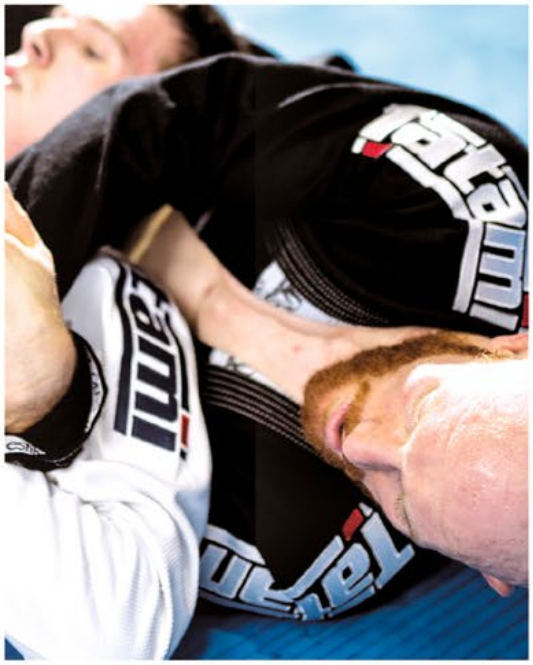
RVCA

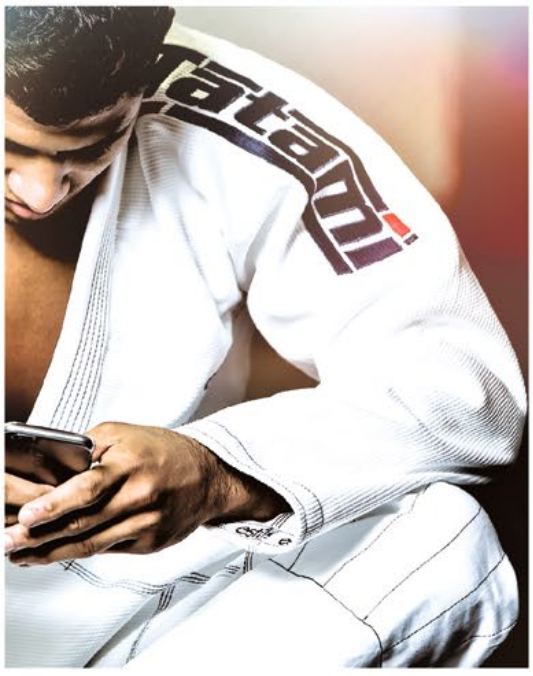
RVCA.COM | #INSPIREDBYRVCA

THE BALANCE OF OPPOSITES

Artist Network Program





Tatami fightwear

estilo5.0